

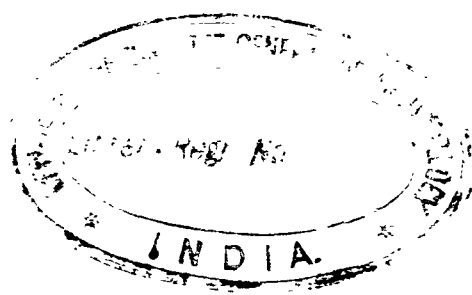
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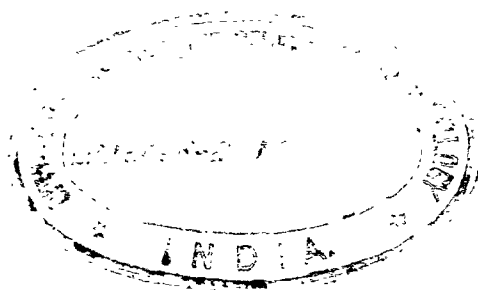
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A HISTORY OF EARLY
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A HISTORY OF EARLY CHINESE PAINTING

VOLUME TWO



A HISTORY OF EARLY
CHINESE PAINTING

BY

OSVALD SIRÉN

VOLUME TWO:

FROM THE SUNG TO THE END OF THE YUAN DYNASTY

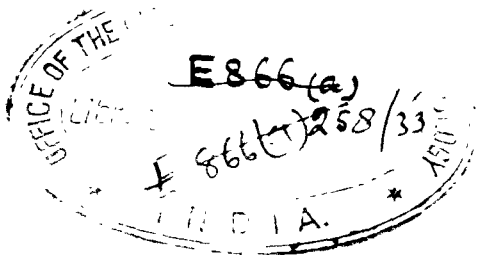
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THE NORTHERN SUNG PERIOD

(1) *Political Events. Confucian State Philosophy. Taoist Opposition*

It is generally admitted that the Sung dynasty marked a culmination in the development of the pictorial arts in China and that its accomplishments in literature, philosophy, and other branches of intellectual and spiritual culture were hardly less important. This very high estimate of the arts, and particularly of painting, during the Sung period may, however, be influenced by the fact that so very few paintings by the great masters of T'ang and earlier times have survived, while many of the leading artists of the Sung period may still be appreciated in their original creations. We may still become subject to the spell of their genius and recognize their brush-work and modes of expression. They stand closer to us in every respect than the great masters of earlier epochs, which, however, is no proof that they had reached a higher level as creative artists.

The historical division of the Sung period in two parts of almost equal length, known as the Northern Sung (960-1126) and the Southern Sung (1127-1279), was by no means only of political importance; the retirement of the government from K'ai-fêng to Hang-chou and the abandonment of Northern China to the Chin Tartars had a far reaching influence also on cultural and artistic activities, and caused a change in spiritual and æsthetic ideals. In order to understand this it may, however, be necessary to recall briefly some of the outstanding political events which form the framework of the history of the Sung dynasty.

After a short initial period of reunification and expansion during the reign of the first emperor, T'ai Tsu (960-976), the new empire became the butt of dangerous attacks by some of the northern border states, and instead of making a stand and fighting the invaders to finality, the rulers and leaders of the nation over and over again sought to purchase peace by offering gold and silk, oxen, horses, and royal princesses to the threatening enemy. On every new occasion, the Chinese had to increase their offers. Still more dangerous was the method soon introduced of making an alliance with one enemy in order to fight another. It was like opening the sluices for a tributary river while trying to fight a flood lower down.

The principal enemies of the Sung empire were the Tungusian and Tangut tribes at its northern and western borders and, later on, the Mongols. The first were organized first in the Liao kingdom and then in the Chin empire; the second in the short-lived but very extensive Hsi Hsia state, and both were finally wiped out by the Mongol avalanche. The wars started at the end of the tenth century in the reign of the second Sung emperor, T'ai Tsung (976-998), and they were continued during the following century with intervals of peace, which, however, contributed little to the strength of the empire. By the successive treaties in 1004 with the Liao, in 1042 with the Hsi Hsia, and in 1127 with the Chin, the Chinese became obliged

to pay ever increasing annual indemnities and to cede certain territories to their victorious neighbours. The last, which involved not only large demands of silver and gold and territory but also the delivery of the whole imperial family into captivity, saw the final capitulation of the Northern Sung dynasty. "With this sad procession of emperors, nobles, and ladies of the royal household (to a number of 3,000), led by a savage and victorious army into a strange land, ends the first drama of the great Sung dynasty."¹

The second part, which was enacted in the South, where the Chinese had rallied around the new imperial capital in Hang-chou, might have ended in a less inglorious fashion, if a stronger enemy had not appeared in the field. The Chin had been pacified not only by the large indemnities of land and money, but also by an ever increasing cultural influence from the Chinese. They ruled over the northern half of the country down to the Huai and the Han rivers, and they showed no intention of encroaching upon the territory of the Southern Sung empire after the conclusion of the peace treaty of 1141. Their government in Yen-ching (Peking) became, as a matter of fact, almost as Chinese as that of Hang-chou, since they adopted the national customs, traditions, and language of the country, and employed Chinese officials. Buddhist art enjoyed a renewed period of activity under their protection, and Yen-ching became a city of imperial splendour. But the relatively peaceful conditions which prevailed during the second half of the twelfth century were completely upset at the beginning of the next century by the irresistible onmarch of the Mongols.

The slowly developing political tragedy of the Sung dynasty was to some extent counterbalanced, and at certain moments interrupted, by the creative forces which became manifest not only in literature and art, but also in philosophy and in political and social reforms. Fresh departures and new ideas were applied in many fields, and though some of them were only of temporary importance, others remained in force long after the fall of the dynasty and became important factors in the future development of Chinese civilization.

This is true, for instance, with regard to the civil administration introduced by the founder of the dynasty, who transferred most of the executive power from the military to the civil authorities. China became now, and remained until recent times, a country where the military authorities had very little influence on the government, which was mainly entrusted to a class of learned officials selected through state examinations. These examinations, which ever since have formed the backbone of Chinese officialdom, existed since the Han period, but their application had been more or less dependent on the general philosophical and religious tendencies of the rulers. There had been times when Buddhist thought or Taoist mysticism had more influence on the selection of high officials than knowledge of the Confucian classics and skill in literary compositions. But now, at the beginning of the Sung era, they were systematized according to the

¹ Cf. J. Macgowan, *Imperial History of China*. Shanghai, 1906, p. 396.

most rigorous Confucian principles. The government of the state as well as the life of the citizens were regulated in adherence to the fundamental moral teachings of the great Sage. The educational system, the principal aim of which was to prepare for the state examinations, was built on the inculcation of filial piety, absolute obedience to superiors, loyalty to the emperor, and veneration for the ancient traditions of the country. It involved a strong national reaction, which by no means became diminished through the adverse political experiences, rather the contrary. It seems almost as if the nationalism of the Chinese were stimulated (or, irritated) in the same measure as they lost their ancient ground to the invading enemies. They had no longer the power of expansion or political leadership, but they built up for themselves a world of their own, perfect by its cultural refinement, its artistic beauty, and its philosophical definition, though enclosed by high walls of traditionalism and self-glorification.

The foremost representatives of this Confucian nationalism were highly cultured gentlemen who held leading positions not only as statesmen but also as writers, poets, and historians. Ou-yang Hsiu (1007–1072), for instance, was a brilliant essayist and the author (together with Sung Ch'i) of the so-called *New History of the T'ang Dynasty*; Ssü-ma Kuang (1019–1086), who earned his great fame among his contemporaries as well as with posterity less by his activities as a minister of state than through his widely known historical work, *T'ung Chien* (Mirror of History), a name given to it upon its publication in 1084 by the emperor, because "to view antiquity as it were in a mirror is an aid in the administration of government"; and Su Shih or Su Tung-p'o, the best known of all these scholar-statesmen, the typical Chinese gentleman, prominent as a poet, a painter, and a calligraphist, and at the same time a great political leader. Each one of these men served for a time as the head of the government, and they were all forced for a longer or shorter period into retirement by opponents who were inspired either by Taoist ideas or by hopes of reforming the government along more liberal lines. Whatever success these oppositional movements may have had for the time being, they were doomed to ultimate failure, because they were not to the same extent as the Confucian principles based on the national traditions and mentality of the Chinese people.

Most remarkable among the attempts to oust the Confucians was the reform of Wang An-shih (1021–1086). He too was a devoted student of the Classics, of which he arranged a new edition "in order that the people might understand the real meaning of the *Canon*", but he utilized his knowledge to build up a kind of state socialism which stood in absolute opposition to the doctrines of the conservative party. The leading thought of his reform, was that "the state should take the entire management of commerce, industry, and agriculture into its own hands with a view to succouring the working classes and preventing them from being ground to dust by the rich".¹ He also attempted to reform the examination system, requiring from the candidates not so much graces of style as acquaintance with practical

¹ Gowen and Hall, *An Outline History of China*, p. 142.

subjects. Theoretically he was far ahead of his time (and rather akin to some of the most radical of present day Kuomintang philosophers), but he lacked sympathetic understanding for the actual needs of the people, without which no permanent reforms can be established. Personally he was obstinate to the utmost (like other idealists of a similar type), and his outward appearance with dirty clothes and unwashed faced constituted a striking opposition to the gentleman-like habits of the Confucian scholars. But he was evidently on good terms with some of the more radical-minded painters like Mi Fei and Li Lung-mien.

When Wang An-shih's theories were put into practice during the reign of the Emperor Shên Tsung (1068-1085) they caused widespread dissatisfaction among the people and complete disorder in the state finances. His position became gradually untenable, and at the death of the emperor the conservative leaders were again called into office. It fell upon Ssü-ma Kuang to undo Wang An-shih's reform laws, and the work was continued by Su Tung-p'o, whose intimate understanding of the Chinese people, their traditions and national characteristics, made him no less appreciated as a leader of the government than as writer and art critic.¹ But when the young Emperor Chê Tsung (1086-1100) seized the reins of the government, the radical party came again in power, and one of Wang An-shih's pupils, Ts'ai Ching, was entrusted with the leadership of the government. He reintroduced many of the reform laws, but his main endeavour seems to have been the humiliation of the conservative party, and in order to accomplish this he favoured in every possible way the Taoists. This met also with approval from the Emperor Hui Tsung (1101-1125), who had much less interest in the government than in romantic dreams of Taoist paradise and æsthetic speculations, and during whose reign, as said above, the first great catastrophe brought havoc in the house of Sung.

The contention between the two main currents of traditional Chinese thought which caused so much bitterness, strife, and even persecution in the political field does not seem to have imposed any adverse conditions or impediments on artistic activity. Many of the painters treated with equal success Confucian and Taoist motives and associated freely with representatives of both parties. The question of faith or doctrines did not enter in their lives. It may be that the Taoist attitude towards nature, in the broadest sense of the word, (including both the seen and the unseen universe) was closest to their hearts, but there were Confucianists, like Su Tung-p'o and his friends, whose interpretations of the objective world were no less poetic or pantheistic. If any of these systems of thought furnished some inspiration for artistic activity, it was much less through their intellectual contents than

¹ The following pronouncement by Su Tung-p'o may serve to throw some light on his principles of government:—

"The good government and peace of a country depend wholly upon the free communication between the ruler and the ruled. During periods of ideal government the humblest subject was free to make known to the emperor his wishes and his woes, but when trouble and disorder prevailed, even the officer nearest the emperor was denied the right to voice his complaint."

by the fact that they allowed wide scope for individual intuition and for combinations with spiritual elements of Buddhist origin. Buddhism as a religion was no longer a dominating force in the intellectual life of the people, but it remained a spiritual undercurrent, irrigating the fields of art and modifying more or less the interpretation of the indigenous philosophies. How the final reconciliation between these divergent currents was accomplished will be noted in our discussion of the culture of the Southern Sung period.

(2) *The Imperial Academy of Art. Emperor Hui Tsung as a Critic and Painter*

The emperors of the Northern Sung dynasty took a keen interest in the encouragement of art, and the activity of the painters became again to a large extent centred at the imperial capital. Important collections of paintings and specimens of calligraphy were formed by several of the august art-patrons, and some of them were also prominent as calligraphists or painters. T'ai Tsung, the second emperor of the dynasty, who earned a great reputation as a writer, ordered that fine paintings and calligraphies should be brought together for the palace collection from all over the country, and he had some of the best specimens of ancient calligraphy engraved on wooden blocks and thus preserved in facsimile for posterity. His personal interest in painting may not have been equally strong, yet he had an important collection of pictures. It was selected and taken care of by the painter Huang Ch'ü-ts'ai (a son of Huang Ch'uan), and once a year, when the imperial repositories were aired, thrown open to the public.

Closely connected with these efforts was the re-establishment of the Imperial Academy of Painting, known as Hua Yüan. A similar institution had existed during the Southern T'ang rule in Nanking, but it became now a state department of equal importance with the Academy of Literature, Shu Yüan, and the Academy of Music, Ch'in Yüan. Painting was thus officially placed on a level with the most venerable of all intellectual occupations in China—literature—which, no doubt, contributed to its vogue among the scholars and *litterati*, and when these two departments reached their full development, in the reign of the Emperor Hui Tsung, the connection became so close that the dividing lines almost disappeared.

Of the following emperors who distinguished themselves as artists, should be mentioned in particular Jên Tsung (1023–1063), who was an excellent calligraphist and a skilful painter, and Hui Tsung (1101–1126), the best known of all the imperial art-patrons, whose æsthetic interests gradually absorbed his best energies and made him neglect the cares of the government. These were entrusted to Ts'ai Chien, the follower of Wang An-shih, who supported the young emperor's artistic inclinations mainly because it made it easier for him to satisfy his own political ambitions.

The collections of paintings, calligraphies, bronzes and other *objets d'art*, which were brought together in the Imperial palace, surpassed by far all the earlier

collections of a similar kind; and as they were carefully catalogued in important publications, we may still form some idea about their contents, though they were dispersed and probably to a large extent destroyed when the capital was sacked by the Chin armies. The famous catalogue of Hui Tsung's picture collection, *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*, which has often been mentioned previously, is one of our main sources of information about the painters of the T'ang and Northern Sung period; it contains not only lists of the paintings but also biographical sketches of the painters.

These are divided into ten classes, according to subjects: I. Buddhist and Taoist, containing 1,179 pictures by 49 painters; II. Human figures, 505 paintings by 33 artists; III. Palaces and other Buildings, 71 pieces by 4 masters; IV. Barbarians, 117 pieces by 5 painters; V. Landscapes, 1,108 pieces by 41 masters; VI. Animals, 324 pieces by 27 masters; VII. Birds and Flowers, 2,786 pieces by 46 painters; VIII. Bamboos, 148 ink-paintings by 12 painters; IX. Dragons and Fishes, 117 pieces by 8 painters; X. Vegetables and Fruits, 25 pieces by 6 painters; making 6,396 paintings by 231 masters in all.

A good number of these pictures were probably copies rather than originals by the old masters, but they were carefully executed and formed thus altogether a most important material for the study of Chinese painting from the earliest times. Never before or later has a collection of similar magnitude been brought together in China.

Most of the contemporary painters were members of the T'u Hua Yüan (the Academy) which now became the directing and controlling power in the field of art. The candidates were examined in various branches of painting, such as religious subjects, human figures, landscape, birds, and animals, flowers, plants, and buildings, and also in calligraphy, literature, and the Classics. Nobody was considered a good painter without a thorough humanistic culture, and it was furthermore emphasized by an imperial decree that the candidates should not copy the old models, but strive to present original interpretations of the subjects presented to them at the examinations. The emperor and his minister Ts'ai Ching were, as we know, strongly opposed to the conservatism of the Confucian school.

The members of T'u Hua Yüan were ranked above those of Shu Yüan and Ch'in Yüan. They wore purple robes and insignia of gold and jade, and those who had reached the *tai chao* degree had, each in his turn, the privilege of waiting in the private apartments of the emperor, an honour not conferred on the members of any other state department.¹

The organization of Hui Tsung's Academy of Painting was, no doubt, as perfect as any such institution ever could be, but it seems doubtful whether this official apparatus and the high social position of the artists contributed to the

¹ Information about the organization of the Painting Academy is offered by Têng Ch'un in *Hua Chi*, chap. *Tsa Shuo* (c. 1167). The materials referring to this subject were also discussed by S. Taki in an article in *Kokka*, 307-8.

development of art, properly speaking, or to the production of great masterpieces of painting. The institution served, after all, as a glorification of the emperor's own whims and ideas; his ambition was to direct it not only in an administrative sense but also from an æsthetic point of view. He was the supreme authority in all matters relating to art and took an active part, for instance, in selecting subjects for the examinations and in criticizing and correcting the works of the painters. His skill as a painter may, indeed, have been sufficient to allow him to hold such a position, but he was hardly—in spite of all the praise bestowed on the imperial painter by Têng Ch'un and others—a creative genius capable of giving a new spiritual or æsthetic impetus to art-life.

Quite characteristic for the artistic ideals of the emperor and his Academy are some of the subjects chosen for the competition of the candidates; for instance: *The bamboos envelop the inn by the bridge*. The representation which was considered the best did not show a pot-house in a bamboo grove, but simply the sign of the inn with the words "spirits" written on it, peeping through the thicket of bamboos. Another time the subject for competition was the following poetical quotation: *The hoofs of his steed come back heavily charged with the scent of trampled flowers*. The successful candidate painted a cluster of butterflies following at a horse's heels, thus showing what attraction they had as if of scented flowers. A third subject was: *A boat lying idle the whole day long as nobody wishes to cross the river*. Some represented the empty boat tied at the river bank, or herons perching at the side of the boat, or crows picking at some straw in the boat, but the best interpretation was offered by the candidate who painted the idle boatsman lying in the boat with his flute beside him. He showed that nobody wanted to cross over the river.

It seems, indeed, as if the traditional connection between painting and poetry had been enforced here in a way that gave precedence to the latter. Painting became almost dangerously akin to literary composition or poetic imagery, and although the traditional requirements, formulated in Hsieh Ho's Six Principles, were kept alive, it is evident that the formal criteria, which now were emphasized more than ever, were absolute fidelity to natural models and greatest care and refinement of execution. This is illustrated by the emperor's own paintings as well as by various anecdotes about his way of criticizing the pictures of the academicians.

We are told by Têng Ch'un how he used to gather the painters in the palace gardens and have them paint various kinds of flowers and birds, thus testing their power of observation and their faculty of reproducing exactly every feature of the charming models. Once some of them were called in to paint a pheasant walking in the garden. They made wonderful pictures, rich in colour and striking in their naturalness; but the emperor said that they all were wrong. Nobody could understand the reason for this condemnation, but some time after the emperor called them together again and pointed out that when a pheasant is climbing a rockery, it does not lift the right foot first (as represented in their pictures) but the left. The imperial authority was gloriously vindicated.

Another time he ordered some of the best *tai chao* of the Academy to decorate the walls of a newly built palace. "When he came to visit the place, he did not bestow any praise on their work; the only thing which attracted his particular attention was a branch of a monthly rose painted above the opening in the front gallery. He asked who had done this picture; and when informed that it was the work of a young new-comer, he was very pleased and bestowed on the man gifts of silk and beautiful robes beside much praise. As nobody could understand the reason for this, an intimate follower ventured finally to ask the emperor about it and received the following answer: "Few artists know how to paint monthly roses, because the petals and leaves of these flowers are quite different at the various seasons and in the morning and evening. This rose is represented as it is in the spring at midday, correctly without the least deviation from nature, and consequently worth the highest recommendation." That was all; the imperial expert added no word about *ch'i yün* and *pi fa*, or any of the traditional principles, but his answer might well have satisfied academy professors even of later times.

The imperial standards of appreciation are further illustrated by similar anecdotes reported by Têng Ch'un, who, however, also praises Hui Tsung as a most divine and imaginative painter. Something of this high praise may be put down as a tribute to a past imperial glory, but it is evident that it could not have been accepted and transmitted by a well-informed critic, who wrote some thirty years after the emperor's death, if it had not had a real foundation. Hui Tsung must have been not only a skilful technician and prominent calligraphist, but also a really fine painter. And it may not be out of place to add here a few words about his pictures, though they chronologically belong to a later chapter.

The emperor's mastership in painting is said to have been a result of his continuous study of the wonderful specimens by old masters in his great collection. "His expert knowledge was complete and thorough, his brush-work divine; he mastered every kind of subject and combined perfectly all the Six Principles, but he specialized in feathers and furs. The eyes of the birds he put in with dots of raw (thick) varnish, almost as large as beans; they stood out in relief and seemed to be moving with life." The author describes in detail a large picture of his representing twenty cranes of the most wonderful, life-like and varied appearance, and also a kind of imaginative landscape with fairy palaces among luminous mountains and shining clouds. "It made the beholder long to pass from the dust of the world to the Island of the Immortals, which was floating as a lofty vision in the air."

These pictures and others of a more or less Taoistic character mentioned by T'ang Hou¹ are no longer preserved, nor does it seem very likely that the three famous landscapes in Japan (two in Konchi-in, Kyoto; the third in Kuonji, Minobu, Kai province), which traditionally pass under Hui Tsung's name, are his own works, though they may be of his time (cf. *Toyo*, viii, pl. xxviii-xxx), but some

¹ In *Ku Chin Hua Chien* (*Mei Shu Ts'ung Shu*, sec. iii, vol. 2) are mentioned: *A Dream Journey to the World of the Immortals* and a copy of Li Chao-tao's *Picking Melons*.

of the minor bird pictures with the emperor's signature, existing in Japan and elsewhere, are very likely specimens of his brush. Best known among these are the *Quail and a Daffodil* in Marquis Asano's collection (*Kokka*, 386), the *Dove at a Branch of Peach Blossoms* in Marquis Inouye's collection (*Kokka*, 25), and the *Sparrow on a Branch of Plum Blossoms* in Marquis Kuroda's collection (*Sogen-meigwashu*, pl. 2). All these pictures are exquisite things within the narrow limits of small bird studies. Greatest economy in the composition and utmost refinement of execution give them a remarkable distinction. (Pl. 22.) The bird and the flowering branch (or the plant) are placed at the one extremity of the design, the rest is empty; but so perfect is the balance and the proportion between the painted volume and the blank space that a definite distance and atmosphere is suggested. These highly finished and delicately coloured pictures are masterpieces of their kind, but they are evidently done by an artist who has had his whole attention concentrated on the minute representation of natural models with no inclination to transpose the motives in an expressionistic sense.

The same may be said of the small picture in the National Museum in Peking representing *A She Monkey with her Baby, a Tuft of Dandelion, and Two Beetles*. There is no formal relation between the somewhat heterogeneous elements in the picture; each of them seems to be a separate study direct from nature. It is provided with the emperor's seals and signature, but the somewhat dry and finicking brushmanship inspires doubts as to its age and authenticity. (Pl. 23.)

The emperor's predilection for small pictures of birds and flowers became naturally a reason for an abundant production of similar things by the members of the Academy and also by later imitators. We shall have occasion to return to some pictures of this type in discussing the bird painters of the Northern Sung period, but the rest of those which carry Hui Tsung's signature may be passed over in silence as none of them seems to be authentic.¹ The influence of the imperial painter in this special field was evidently very strong, but whether he also exercised some directing influence in the larger field of landscape painting is more doubtful. The leading masters among the landscape painters had stronger traditions and greater models to learn from, and they were not of a kind that would be easily swayed by imperial authority.

(3) *Kuo Hsi and his Treatise on Landscape Painting*

The great tradition of monochrome landscape painting, which we followed in a previous chapter to the beginning of the eleventh century, was continued during the

¹ No less than six pictures, representing birds and branches of trees and flowers, are reproduced under Hui Tsung's name in *Chung-kuo Ming Hua Chi* and five pictures of a similar kind in the illustrated catalogue of the Tokyo Exhibition, 1928. A more important work, which evidently has the strongest criteria of being authentic, is the landscape with figures called *Wen Hsü t'u* (A Literary Meeting), which is reproduced in *Ku Kung*, vol. 7. The picture measures 5 ft. 8 in. by 3 ft. 9 in. and is inscribed with poems by the emperor and his minister Ts'ai Ching. It looks like an illustration to some of the gatherings of scholars in the imperial garden that are described by the chroniclers.

reigns of the Emperors Jên Tsung (1023–1063) and Shên Tsung (1068–1085) by Kuo Hsi, who in some respects may be said to have consummated it. After him there was no landscape painter of equal importance during the Northern Sung dynasty and the old ideals were soon replaced by new ones of a rather different kind. His painted work must have been of the first magnitude, grand and strong in every respect; he was a born landscape painter of the old type and by his pronouncements on the aims and methods of this art he gave it also a verbal formulation which has remained of classic importance during centuries.

Kuo Hsi, whose *tzü* was Shun-fu, but who more often was called Ho-yang, after his native place in Honan, may have been born about 1020, or shortly after. He was admitted at an early age to the Imperial Academy of Painting and soon displayed great skill in handling the brush. "As time passed, he penetrated deeper into the art of landscape painting and adopted somewhat the style of Li Ch'êng. His manner of composition became then most wonderful. But later on he worked according to his own fashion, executing his own conceptions with great ease on the white walls of the large halls. He painted tall pines, lofty trees, winding streams, craggy cliffs, deep gorges, high peaks, and ridges steep and beautiful, partly cut off by clouds and mist, or hidden in a haze; their shapes and aspects were innumerable. He was considered by the critics as the only great man of his time. The older he grew, the stronger became his brush; it seemed to increase in strength as the years were telling on his face."¹

The old critics are unanimous in praising the boldness and strength of Kuo Hsi's brush-work. His mountains were painted with wrinkles like convoluted clouds (*chüan-yün ts'un*), and the branches and twigs of his bare trees were like the claws of crabs. He worked mostly on a large scale, and many of his greatest pictures were executed directly on the wall in a technique which he had developed through a study of Yang Hui-chih's landscapes in clay-relief. "He ordered the masons not to use smooth plaster, but simply to throw the mud with the hand on the wall so that it formed hollows and projections. When the wall had dried, he applied the ink, and as he followed the shapes and traces (of the mud) he felt his way and made peaks and ridges, forests and valleys, adding here and there buildings and human figures; and he did it as naturally as if they had been created by heaven. This was called "shadow wall" (painting), and the method was afterwards practised by many artists. But all these paintings were destroyed later on in the Sung period, when the walls were spread with white-wash."²

Kuo Hsi's vigorous and lofty works, which had been very highly esteemed by the Emperor Shên Tsung, no longer corresponded to the æsthetic ideals of the Emperor Hui Tsung. He sacrificed them pitilessly, ordering the frescoed walls to be white-washed, and the series of great landscapes, which hung in another hall of the palace, to be taken down in order to make room for pictures by earlier masters.

¹ *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u.*

² *T'êng Ch'un, Hua Chi, Tsa Shuo.*

Thus it happened that Têng Ch'un's father, who held a high office in the palace under the Emperor Hui Tsung, found an old torn painting by Kuo Hsi used as a rag by some picture restorers, and when he asked the emperor's permission to take it away, he received not only this picture but a whole cartload of landscape paintings by Kuo Hsi, which had been tucked away as useless material in a store-room. Truly, a most unusual collection, as said by Têng Ch'un; but this, too, has disappeared without a trace.

Kuo Hsi's works are nowadays very rare, yet some pictures still exist which may be accepted as originals by the master. Most important among them are two large hanging scrolls on silk in the Palace Museum in Peiping, both equally impressive by the fantastic grandeur of the compositions and the vigour of the brush-work. The one which is known as *The Village among the Wild and Lofty Mountains* (*Shan Chuang Kao I*)¹ represents a huge scenery dominated by a towering mountain of the deeply furrowed and creviced type that was introduced by Li Ch'êng. (Pl. 1.) In front of the mountain are winding terraces forming the banks of a river which collects the water from some rushing streams. Low buildings under thatched roofs are spread on the terraces among leafy trees and bamboo groves, while the old gnarled pines with dry branches lean over the edges of the crevices, as if they were vainly trying to reach the water that rushes so deep below them. Far away at the bottom of the main gorge is a temple, and on the adjoining terrace a tall pagoda. The elements of composition are the same as in numerous other pictures, but they are combined into a design of uncommon grandeur and decorative beauty. The abundant details are not confusing, but subdued by the rhythm of the massive forms and open spaces. The inaccessible ruggedness which characterized, for instance, Ching Hao's, Kuan T'ung's, and even Fan K'uan's landscapes is modified into a more open and friendly aspect. The human figures are playing a more important rôle than in the earlier compositions: The travellers on the roads, the fishermen in the boat, the old scholar, who is playing on the *ch'in* for his guest in the little villa, and the men who are drinking wine in the inn, while their horses are feeding before the door—all contribute to give the scene a tone of intimacy, but also to emphasize the greatness of nature in proportion to the smallness of man.

The other picture in the same collection, also signed, and dated in correspondence with the year 1072, is called *Early Spring* (*Tsao Ch'un*).² (Pl. 2.) It is related to the former in spirit and design, but the presentation of the mountain scenery is more dramatic. The great central mountain is brought right down into the midst of the foreground; its bulging and convoluting shapes, furrows, and ridges are accompanied by the writhing trunks and branches of bare trees and framed on both sides by rushing streams and winding waters. The men in the boats are small as ants and the buildings at the bottom of the side-gorges are

¹ Fully signed; size: 5 ft. 9 in. by 3 ft. 11 in. Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. vi.

² The picture is mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*, no. 17, and inscribed with a poem by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung. Size: 4 ft. 9 in. by 3 ft. 3 in. Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. x.

almost lost in the haze which envelops the middle section of the picture. Here the view becomes an impenetrable mystery, but above is clearness—high ridges and fringes of innumerable small trees in strong silhouette against the clear sky. The details are infinitesimal, the forms and shapes of endless variation, but they are all woven into a great winding movement that dominates the main part of the picture; only the crowning peaks are straight and quiet. None of the earlier masters could bring a great and exuberantly rich motive so completely under the domination of a unifying rhythm and remould it so freely in accordance with an expressionistic idea. They may have been able to suggest the poetry and grandeur of nature in its various aspects, but they did not attain the degree of decorative unity and dramatic expression that characterize Kuo Hsi's masterpieces.

In the National Museum in Peking are at least four pictures ascribed to Kuo Hsi and provided with his signature, but I doubt whether any of them is an original work. Most interesting as a composition is the *Kuan Pei t'u*, which represents two gentlemen reading a large inscribed stone tablet on a hillock under some decaying old trees, while their grooms are waiting with the mules below, almost the same motive as in the famous picture by Li Ch'êng mentioned before. Kuo Hsi's composition is richer and bolder than Li Ch'êng's, but the execution seemed to me to be by an inferior man. Of the three horizontal scrolls, which are catalogued as his works in the same museum, only one is known to me—a view of a mountain-pass with a great gate—and it is certainly a copy of comparatively recent date.

Far more plausible as an original by the master is the *chüan* in the Freer Gallery, which is known as *An Autumn Day in the Valley of the Yellow River*. (Pl. 3.) It would be wrong to suppose that the picture represents some actual scenery of the Yellow River valley. It may have been inspired by impressions that the artist received when travelling along the river, but these he has utilized quite freely and transposed into a vision of cool autumnal grandeur. The appeal of the work lies in the atmospheric tone as much as in the rhythmic succession of the open stretches of the winding river and the great mountains with tall pines and gnarled leaf-trees at their foot. It is a grand and far-reaching composition with an amazing mass of well-defined detail, now more than ever difficult to discern since the picture has lost some of its original freshness.¹

All the descriptions offered by Chinese recorders of Kuo Hsi's pictures² indicate that they were admired particularly for their power to suggest the moods of nature, their imaginative and yet convincing rendering of the traditional motives. We are told that his mountains were coiled up like snakes, that the stones were massed together into shapes like devil's faces, that the barren trees stretched their branches like the talons of some giant eagle towards the torn and tattered clouds. He

¹ Two large landscapes are reproduced under Kuo Hsi's name in the catalogue of the Tokyo Exhibition, 1928, one representing some old pines on a rock, belonging to ex-President Hsü Shih-ch'ang, the other a huge mountain scenery, belonging to Mr. Kuo Tsung-hsi.

² Cf. *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. vii, ll. 28-9.

painted winter scenes with heavy snow in the caves and crevices and ice on the river, where the ferry with shivering people was pulled across; spring mornings with awakening birds, dancing waves, and hazy mountains, but his favourite motives were the autumn evenings, when the sky was clearing after rain and the geese were returning in a long line that seemed to connect with the mountain ranges beyond the barren plains. One of these autumn scenes by Kuo Hsi makes the commentator regret that he has a body which does not allow him to follow the geese towards the setting sun.

Kuo Hsi's art and his historical position receive further elucidation through his discussion of the aims, methods, motives, and technical points of landscape painting, which have been transmitted by his son, Kuo Ssü, under the title *Lin Ch'üan Kao Chih*, The Great Message of Forests and Streams. This is, however, no homogenous essay but a collection of sayings by the master linked together and interspersed with comments by his son. The main part is the first section, known as *Shan Shui Hsün*, Comments on Landscapes, but to this are added four more sections, i.e. *Hua I*, Ideas (or Motives) of Painting, *Hua Chüeh*, Secrets of Painting, dealing largely with technical matters, *Hua Ko Shih I*, Supplement to the Rules of Painting, containing mostly descriptions of compositions by Kuo Hsi, and *Hua T'i*, a short additional chapter of anecdotal type, which has no connection whatsoever with the rest of the text. Some editions of this work are said to contain one more additional chapter under the title *Hua Chi*, Records of Paintings, but it is not included in the reprints in *Wang Shih Hua Yüan* and *Mei Shu Ts'ung Shu*, which I have consulted (beside a shorter version in *Hua Hsüeh Hsin Yin*).

The value of the various sections is very unequal, depending on their more or less intimate relation to the words or ideas of Kuo Hsi. Most important in this respect is evidently the first section, *Shan Shui Hsün*, which forms the backbone of the whole treatise and (with the exception of the introductory remarks and some interspersed comments) consists of Kuo Hsi's own words. I have therefore given a full translation of it. The technical supplement to this is formed by *Hua Chüeh*, which evidently also reproduces the master's own discussions and advice in matters of composition and technical execution. Of this I have translated such portions that may be of greatest interest to Western students. The other sections seem to be more freely composed by Kuo Ssü (possibly, in part, even by later editors); they contain descriptions of Kuo Hsi's motives and compositions, but very little that is of importance for the appreciation of his æsthetic ideas or theories about landscape painting. I have therefore translated only the first part of *Hua I*, which so to say illustrates by its anecdotal stories how his theories should be applied.¹

¹ Only extracts from *Shan Shui Hsün* and from the *Hua I* have been previously rendered in foreign languages. Fenollosa's book *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, ii, pp. 12-19, contains some parts, but the translation is very free and often misleading, probably because it was done by somebody more familiar with Japanese than with Chinese. Giles, op. cit., pp. 114-15, includes only some minor fragments. Petrucci

A further critical discussion of the text, its component parts and various editions, would carry us beyond the limits of the present work. It may, however, be noted that it is the only treatise on landscape painting from Sung or earlier times which may be accepted as absolutely authentic; its historical value is consequently very great. The earliest printed edition of it known at present is from the beginning of the Yüan period (1271), but it seems that part of the text was already published in the fourth year of the Ta kuang era (1110) with a preface by a man called Wang Wei, and that there was another early edition with a preface by Hsü Kuang-ning, dated 1125. If this information is correct, the *Lin Ch'üan Kao Chih*, as it exists to-day, would be a somewhat enlarged and commented edition by Kuo Ssü of a text by his father, which existed at that time in another more condensed version.¹

Shan Shui Hsün (Comments on Landscapes)

If the superior man loves landscape, what is the reason for it? Hills and gardens are the constant dwelling-places for one who seeks to cultivate his original nature; springs and rocks are the constant joy for the whistling rambler; the fisherman and wood-cutter are the constant meeting for the hermit and recluse; the ape and the crane are the constant view of one who wants to fly and to call. Bridles and fetters in the din of the world are always repugnant to human nature, while sages and immortals in haze and mist are what human nature yearns for but cannot reach.

In times of peace and glory the two authorities are those of the prince and the parents, and if they are pure, virtue and purity will rule in public and private life. With such bonds, how could the perfect man retire on high, break off from the customs of the common world and be as immaculate as the Mount Chi and the River P'in or have the same fragrance as Huang and Ch'i?² The Ode of the White Colt and the Song of the Purple Fungus³ are unavoidably gone, and yet, the wish for the forests and springs, the companionship of the mists and the vapours remain in his dreams. The ears and the eyes perceive them no more, but when grasped by a master-hand, they are revealed again, and it is possible, without stepping out of the house or leaving the sitting mat to enjoy the streams and the valleys. The cries of the apes and the songs of the birds seem to reach the ear again, while the luminous mountains and the colour of the far expanding waters attract the eyes. Is it not "to please the mind of another and really (thereby) attain my own wish"?

That is why the fundamental idea of landscape painting is so highly appreciated in the world. But if this is not realized and if the landscapes are looked on in a light-hearted way, is it not like blurring a divine spectacle and defiling the pure wind?

There are various types of landscape painting; some are spread out into large compositions, in which nothing is left out; others are condensed into quite small

published in *Ostasiat. Zeitschrift*, i, pp. 395-40, a French translation of two of the most philosophical paragraphs together with a highly æsthetic commentary. Waley (op. cit., pp. 189-94) translated the same, together with other parts of *Shan Shui Hsün* and *Hua I* (including the quotations of old poems), into admirable English, but his translation is also limited to relatively short extracts. I have profited by it, but ventured to give my own interpretation of the same paragraphs, aiming at faithfulness to the text rather than at literary style.

¹ For further information *re* various editions of *Lin Ch'üan Kao Chih*, cf. the Annotated Bibliography of Books on Calligraphy and Painting, *Shu Hua Shu Lu Chieh T'i*. The translation of the two opening paragraphs has been corrected by Professor P. Pelliot, who also revised a few other passages of my translation.

² Huang and Ch'i, two old men mentioned in *Tz'ü Yüan*.

³ Classic odes, the first in *Shih Ching*, the other in *Tz'ü Yüan*.

views, which, however, are not negligible. There are also different ways of looking at landscapes; if one looks at them with a heart of the woods and the streams, their value becomes great, but if one looks at them with proud and haughty eyes, their value becomes quite low.

Landscapes are large things; he who contemplates them should be at some distance; only so is it possible for him to behold in one view all the shapes and atmospheric effects of the mountains and streams. As to figure paintings of men and women, executed with a fine brush, they can be unrolled in the hand or on a small table, and thus be completely seen and examined. These are all different manners of painting.

It has been truly said that among the landscapes there are those fit to walk through, those fit to contemplate, those fit to ramble in, and those fit to live in. All pictures may reach these standards and enter the category of the wonderful, but those fit to walk through or to contemplate are not equal to those fit to ramble or to live in. Why is it so? Look at the landscapes of to-day. They comprise distances of several hundred *li*, but there is not three or four tenths of the space which is fit to idle or dwell in. Yet, they are accepted as of the class of pictures fit to idle or dwell in. But the yearning of the wise men for the woods and streams is aroused by the existence of such beautiful places. Therefore the painters must keep this idea in mind and the beholders should examine the pictures according to the same. That may be called not to lose the fundamental idea.

Painting has also its laws of physiognomy. Li-Ch'êng's progeny was prosperous and abundant; he made the foot of the mountains and the face of the earth very thick and strong, broad and large, graceful at the top and luxuriant below, which is in agreement with the characteristics of having a progeny; but I will not dwell particularly on such shapes or characteristics but give the reasons why it should be so.

There is no difference between the study of painting and the study of calligraphy. Those who nowadays study Chung Yu,¹ Wang Hsi-chih, Yü Shih-nan,² and Liu Kung-ch'üan³ will after some time become like them. Great men and learned scholars do not limit themselves to one school, it is necessary to combine (several models), and to study and make observations on a broad basis, so that one may form a personal style and gradually reach perfection. Nowadays students from Ch'i and Lu (Shantung) imitate only Ying-ch'iu (Li Ch'êng), while students from Kuan and Shên (Shensi) imitate only Fan K'uan; they follow only one road in their study, tramping in the footsteps of their predecessors, although their respective provinces comprise many thousand *li* and great many districts and kinds of people worthy to be represented. To follow only one single school in one's study has since olden times been considered a fault; it is like playing only one cord; those who will not hear it should not blame those who do not hear. From earliest times the new has always seemed attractive and the old boring to the ears and eyes of men. Therefore I think that the great men and scholars do not keep to one single style or school.

Liu Tzū-hou⁴ has well discussed literary style, but I think that not only literature but everything has its secret rules; this being so, always, how much more for painting. But how can it be told? Whatever motive the painter represents, be it large or small, complicated or simple, he should do it by concentrating on its essential nature. If something of the essential is lacking, the soul is not manifest. He must do his work with his whole soul; if he does not work with his whole soul, the essential will not be clear. He must be severe and respectful in his work, otherwise it will lack depth of thought. He must apply zeal and reverence to complete it, otherwise the picture will not be properly finished.

¹ Chung Yu, d. 230, famous for his skill in the *li*-style.

² Yü Shih-nan (558-648), a brilliant writer in the time of T'ang T'ai-Tsung.

³ Liu Kung-ch'üan (778-865), one of China's most famous calligraphists.

⁴ Liu Tsung-yüan (773-819), a famous poet and essayist.

Therefore when he is possessed by a spirit of laziness but forces himself (to paint), his brush-work will be soft and weak without decision. It is the fault of not concentrating on the essential. When he feels distracted and throws down something in a disorderly way, the forms become obscure and evasive without vigour. It is the fault of not putting the whole soul into the work. When he is light-hearted and excited, his forms will become unsteady, sketchy, and not complete. It is the fault of lack of severity. If he is sluggish and careless, his style will be lax and coarse and not properly adjusted. It is the fault of working without zeal and reverence. Thus, lack of decision leads to faults of definition, lack of vigour, to loss of ease and dignity; lack of completeness to faults of composition, lack of orderly arrangement to faults in the relation between the important and the indifferent. These are the greatest faults of the painters. But this may be conveyed only to the intelligent.

I, Kuo Ssü, often saw my father working on one or two pictures. Sometimes he would put them away and did not pay any attention to them. Ten to twenty days often passed before he turned to them again, and he repeated the method three times, his intention being not to be too impulsive. This kind of disinclination, isn't it the same as what he meant by the spirit of laziness? When, however, he felt inspired and elated, he worked forgetting everything else; but if some disturbing thing happened, he would put away (his work) and not pay any attention to it. This relaxation, isn't it what he meant by distracted spirit?

On the days when he was going to paint (he would place himself) at a bright window before a clean table and burn incense right and left. He took a fine brush and the most excellent ink, washed his hands and cleaned the ink stones as if to receive an important guest. He let the thoughts settle in his soul, and then he worked. Isn't this what he meant by not to work in the hurry of excitement? What he had planned, he would remove, what he had put in he would modify, not only once or twice but over and over again. Each picture had to be done over from the beginning to the end as if he was fighting a severe enemy; then only it was finished. Isn't this what he meant by not working in a sluggish and careless way?

And it may be said that everything, be it large or small, must be handled in a similar way in order to be well accomplished. My father often explained these things to me in great detail, and I have followed his teachings as my guide during my whole life.

He who learns to paint flowers takes a stalk of the flower, places it in a deep hole in the ground and examines it from above; in this way the flower may be completely grasped. He who learns to paint bamboos places a stalk of bamboo in the clear moonlight, so that its shadow falls on a white wall; in this way the real shape of the bamboo comes out. He who learns to paint landscapes should not do it differently. He should go himself to the mountains and streams in order to grasp their aspects and meaning by seeing them. The effect of real streams and valleys is comprehended only at a distance; when seen close by, their component elements are grasped.

The clouds and vapours of real landscapes are not the same at the four seasons. In spring they are light and diffused, in summer rich and dense, in autumn scattered and thin, in winter dark and solitary. When such general effects are to be seen in the pictures and not simply disrupted shapes, the clouds and the vapours have an air of life.

The mist around the mountains is not the same at the four seasons. The mountains of spring are light and seductive as if smiling; the mountains of summer have a blue-green colour which seems to be dropping all over; the mountains of autumn are bright and clean as if dressed with adorning paint; the mountains of winter are sad and tranquil as if sleeping. When such general ideas are expressed in the pictures and the representation is not finicky, the atmosphere of the misty mountains is well rendered.

The wind and rain of true landscapes can be grasped only at a distance; when examined at close range, one cannot make out the aspects of their complex directions and movements.

The light and shade of real mountains can be seen in their completeness only from afar; if seen close by, they become small patches, and one does not obtain the effects of light and dark, the visible and the invisible.

The figures on the mountains mark out the roads; the high buildings on the mountains serve to make the scenery more important. The woods of the mountains with their lights and shades divide the far from the near. The streams of the valleys should be sometimes disrupted, sometimes broad, thus indicating the depth and shallowness of the gulleys. The ferries and bridges are indications of human activity. The fishing boats and angling rods serve to indicate human intentions.

The majestic big mountain is the master of all the minor mountains, which are arranged around it in a certain order. The ridges and the mounds, the forests and the gulleys, far and near, large and small, turn to it as to their master. Its appearance is like that of an emperor gloriously enthroned among princes gathering at court, but with no arrogance or haughtiness. The tall and straight pines represent the leaders among the trees. They support the climbing and creeping herbs and trees which rely on them as on commanding masters. They seem like superior men, contented and successful among the minor men who serve them confidently without vexation or annoyance.

The mountains which are seen quite close have a certain appearance; those seen at a distance of several *li* have another appearance, and those seen at a distance of several tens of *li* still another. Every distance causes a difference; the shapes of the mountains vary with every step. The front of the mountain has a certain aspect; its side has another, its back still another. From whatever side one looks at the mountain, the aspect is different. It may be said that the shapes of the mountains depend on the view-point of the beholder. A single mountain may thus combine the shapes and aspects of several tens or hundreds of mountains, which should be thoroughly grasped.

The mountains of spring and summer have a certain air; those of autumn and winter have another air; it may be said that they offer quite different views at the four seasons. The morning and the evening, the clear and the overcast sky produce also various effects of the mountains. It may be said that their aspects are changing according to the hours of the day, and one mountain may thus contain the effects or ideas of several tens or hundreds, which should be properly scrutinized.

The mist and clouds of the spring mountains are downy and diffused, and the people happy. The luxuriant trees of the summer mountains are abundant and shady and the people contented. The autumn mountains are clear and pure, the leaves are falling and the people quiet. The winter mountains are covered up by dark storm clouds, the people silent and lonely.

The contemplation of such pictures, evokes in men the corresponding ideas; it is as if one were among the mountains and the scenery existed outside the imagination. When one sees the light mist and the clear roads, one feels like walking; when one sees the quiet streams and the setting sun, one feels like stopping in contemplation; when one sees the lonely men living in the mountains, one feels like staying there; when one sees the cliffs, the streams and the stones, one feels like rambling among them. The contemplation of such pictures arouse such reactions in the heart. It is as if one really came to these places. The conceptions of such pictures are more than wonderful.

The south-eastern mountains are all strangely beautiful; heaven and earth have not been unfair to the South-East; but the earth is there very low¹; the waters which gather here overflow it, washing and cleaning and exposing it as they flow away, so that the soil becomes fertile and the waters shallow. The mountains have many wonderful peaks and steep cliffs, which reach beyond the Great Bear and the Milky Way. The waterfalls are ten thousand feet high; they seem to fly and drop down from the vaporous clouds like the streams rushing down from Hua-shan which are ten thousands of feet . . .

¹ According to the Chinese cosmology the surface of the earth is deflecting towards the south-east.

The north-western mountains are all massive and thick; heaven and earth have not been opposed to the North-West. The earth is very high; the waters come from far away, winding among hills and banks, crowding and swelling as they dig into the soil which becomes rich, while the waters are deep. The mountains are piled and coiled up, continuing in unbroken lines for more than a thousand *li*. The border hills are topped and form winding chains, which pull out in the four directions towards the open land like the branches of Sung shan which consist of steep hills. . . .

Sung shan (in Honan) has many beautiful streams, Hua shan (in Shensi) has many beautiful peaks, Hêng shan (in Hunan) has many beautiful crevices, Ch'ang shan has many beautiful gorges, T'ai shan rises as a dominant master peak. T'ien t'ai (Chekiang), Wu-i (Fukien), Lu shan (Kiangsi), Huo shan (Shansi), Yen-tang (Chekiang), Min shan (Szechuan), O-mei shan (Szechuan), Wu-hsia (Szechuan), T'ien t'an (the Altar of Heaven), Wang-wu (Shansi), Lin-lü (Honan), Wu-tang (Hupeh) are all the most famous mountains and chief places from which treasures are extracted and in which are the caves where the ancient sages retired.

Wonderfully lofty and divinely beautiful are these mountains. In order to exhaust their marvels and grasp the work of the Creator, one must love their spirit, study their essential features, wander about them, widely satiate the eyes with them and store up the impressions in the heart. Then, even if the eye does see the silk and the hand does not govern the brush and the ink, marvellous, mysterious, boundless becomes that picture of mine.

Thus, as Huai-su¹ listened in the night to the sound of the Chia-ling River, his grass writing became still more beautiful, and as Chang Tien² looked on Lady Kung-sun's sword-play, his brush-manner became still more expressive.

Those who nowadays wield the brush do not care to increase their experience; they do not make observations in a clear and thorough way, their practice does not go very far, and they do not grasp the essential features. When they get hold of a piece of paper or a bit of wall, they wave the brush and let the ink flow down rapidly. How could they gather the atmosphere of the mist and the vaporous clouds and convey the message of the streams and the mountains?

The wrong statements and principal faults may also be defined. What does it mean to increase one's experience? In a recent picture representing a virtuous man enjoying a mountain, the man is placed so that his chin is supported by the peak, and in another picture of a sage enjoying the water, the man is shown inclining his ear before the cliff. These are faults resulting from insufficient experience. Virtuous men enjoying the mountains should be represented as in Po Lo-t'ien's (Po Chü-i) *Grass Hut* picture; then the idea of dwelling in the mountain is well expressed. Sages enjoying the water should be represented as in Wang Mo-ch'ü's *Wang-ch'uan* picture; then the delight in the water is brought out abundantly. The enjoyments of sages and wise men cannot be represented by one single figure.

What does it mean to make observations in a clear and thorough way? In recent pictures of mountains the peaks are no more than three or five, and in the pictures of water the waves do not exceed three or five. Such faults are caused by lack of clearness and thoroughness. In a picture of mountains there should be a great number of them, high and low, large and small. The virtue shining out to the shoulders, the head inclined in salutation, the body completely responsive,³ such is the complete realization of the beauty of the mountains. In painting water one should represent it with order and confusion, whirling, splashing, overflowing, leading out towards a far expanse. The representation is satisfying only when the water is sufficiently abundant.

¹ Huai-su, a famous calligrapher of the T'ang period, who excelled in "grass characters".

² Chang Tien, "Crazy Chang," was another excentric character of the T'ang period, famous for his writing and his love of wine.

³ Words by Meng-tzū.

What does it mean not to have enough experience (to be one-sided)? Painters of to-day who are born in Wu (Kiangsu) or in Yüeh (Chekiang) paint the high and barren places of the South-East; those who live at Hsien-ch'ing (Shensi) represent the strong and toppling Kuan-lung mountains. Those who learned from Fan K'uan are lacking in the refinement and beauty of Ying-ch'iu (Li Ch'êng). Those who learned from Wang Wei have not Kuan T'ung's bony style (structural manner). All these faults depend on insufficient experience.

What does it mean not to grasp the essential features? Mountains of a thousand *li* are not entirely marvellous, and how could a water-course of ten thousand *li* be beautiful in all its parts?

The T'ai-hang range is the pillow of China, but its face is Lin-lü (a place in Honan). T'ai shan occupies Ch'i and Lu (Shantung), but its most beautiful aspects are at Lung-yen. If one paints these mountains quite alike, what difference will there then be from a map? All the faults of this kind result from not grasping the essential points.

Therefore, to paint only sloping banks leads to coarseness; to paint only solitary and empty places leads to meanness; to paint only figures leads to vulgarity; to paint only high buildings leads to confusion. He who paints only stones exposes the bones, while he who paints only the soil makes too much flesh.

Brush-work which is not finished and completed is called scattered and careless; it expresses no real ideas. Ink and colour which are not moist and shining are called dry and arid. They express no living thoughts.

Water which does not flow and murmur may be called dead water. Clouds which are not alive may be called frozen clouds. Mountains, on which one cannot distinguish the clear from the dark parts, are without sun and shade. If the mountains are not divided into hidden and visible parts, it may be said that the mists and the vapours are missing.

The places on the mountains where the sun arrives are bright, but the spots where it does not reach are dark; the shapes of the mountains depend on the sun and the shade. When the bright and the dark parts are not divided, the mountains are said to be without sun and shade. The places on the mountains which are enveloped in mist and vapours are hidden, but where the mist and vapours do not reach, the parts are visible. The aspects of the mountains depend on the mist and the vapours. When the hidden and visible parts are not divided, the mountains are said to be without mist and shade.

Mountains are big things; their shapes may be high and lofty, proud and arrogant, dignified and generous; they may be as if seated with legs spread out or with legs crossed. They may be massive and thick, bold and brave; they may reveal a living spirit; and be majestic and strong. They may be as if looking around or bowing in salutation. They may have a cover on the top and a seat below, a support in front and something to lean on at the back. They may be looking down as if observing something, or strolling about waving like banners. Such are the great aspects of the mountains.

Water is a thing alive; its appearance may be quiet and deep, soft and smooth; it may be like the big ocean, or it may be winding and curving. It may be unctuous and glossy, or sprinkling and bubbling, dashing like arrows. It may come from many springs and be flowing far away. It may form waterfalls reaching up to the skies and rushing down into the earth; it may have peaceful fishermen and a joyful vegetation (at its banks). It may bring along mist and clouds which make it look beautiful and attractive. It may form shining streams in the valleys and be dazzlingly bright. Such are the living aspects of water.

The mountains have the water-courses as their arteries, grass and trees as their hair; mist and clouds as their complexion. Therefore mountains must have waters to be alive, grass and trees to be beautiful, mist and clouds to be fine and alluring.

The water has mountains as its face, pavilions and kiosks as its eyebrows and eyes,

angling and fishing to give it animation. Therefore when there is a mountain, the water looks attractive; when there are pavilions and kiosks, it looks bright and pleasant, when there are fishers and anglers, it looks wide and great. Such are the combinations of mountains and water.

Among the mountains there are high ones and low ones. The high ones have their arteries below, their shoulders and haunches are opening wide; their supporting feet are strong and thick. The peaks and cliffs are standing close together as if they were linked into a bright unbroken belt. High mountains of such kind are called not orphans and not tumbling. The low mountains have their arteries above; their tops are half drooping, their necks are intertwined, their supporting roots big and strong, their piled up mounds are full and rounded; they reach far into the earth; nobody can measure their depth. Low mountains of such kind are called not flat, and not dispersed. If the high mountain is solitary it is of the common class; if the low mountain is slight, its spirit is dispersed. Such are the styles of mountains and water.

The rocks form the bones of heaven and earth. They should be buried deep in the earth and not be disclosed on the surface. The water is the blood of heaven and earth; the blood should circulate and not be frozen or obstructed.

Mountains without mist and clouds are like a spring without flowers and grass.

Mountains without clouds are not beautiful, without water not alluring, without paths they show no movement, without forests no life; without depth they are shallow, without horizontal extension they have only foreground, without height they are low. Mountains have three dimensions: Looking from the foot of the mountain towards its top is called height; looking from the front towards the back of the mountain is called depth; looking from a near one to a far off mountain is called flat (horizontal) distance. The tone of the height dimension is clear and bright; the tone of the depth dimension heavy and dark, while that of the horizontal dimension is sometimes clear and sometimes dark. The height is boldly resolute; the depth is made up by layer beyond layer; the effect of distance is obtained by inserting vaporous lines which gradually disappear.

The figures of the three dimensions are as follows: Those on the heights clear and distinct; those in the depth small and delicate; those in the distance mixed and immobile. The figures which are clear and distinct are not short, those which are fine and delicate are not tall, those which are mixed and immobile not large.

The size of the mountains is of the third degree: they are bigger than the trees, but the trees are bigger than the men. If the mountains are not several ten times bigger than the trees, they are not large mountains; if the trees are not more than ten times bigger than the men, they are not large trees. The part by which trees can be compared with men are the leaves; the thing by which men can be compared with trees is the head. A certain quantity of leaves may be equal to the head of men; the head is made up by a certain quantity of leaves. The men, the trees and the mountains have all standard proportions between them.

A mountain should be high. When completely shown it is not high, but if its haunches (middle portions) are surrounded by mist and vaporous clouds, then it is high. The water should be far extending. When shown completely it has no extension, but if partly hidden, partly shining in a broken course, then it is far extending. . . .

In the foreground should be coiling streams, split mountains, crooked trees and tortuous woods arranged into a picture. As one approaches such a picture the details will not be boring but satisfying to the eye even at a close examination. Towards the sides the views should be open. The ranges and ridges should have many sections (layers) linked together and vanishing with the distance. When one draws away, they will then not be boring but entirely satisfying to the eyes.

Far off mountains have no wrinkles; far off water no waves; far off men no eyes; i.e. they have them, though they do not seem so.

Hua I (Ideas or Motives for Painting)

The men of the world think that pictures are made simply by moving the brush; they do not understand that painting is no easy matter. Chuang-tzŭ said: "The painter takes off his clothes and sits crosslegged"—a true statement about the painter's ways. The artist must nourish in his heart gentleness and cheerfulness; his ideas must be quiet and harmonious as said (in *Li Chi*), the heart should be quiet, honest and sincere to the utmost (see Couvreur, *Dict.*, p. 510), then the various aspects of man's gladness and sorrow and of every other thing, be it pointed, oblique, bent or inclined, will appear naturally in his mind and be spontaneously brought out by his brush.

Ku K'ai-chih of the Chin dynasty constructed for himself a high building as a studio for painting; he was, indeed, a wise man of ancient times. If one does not act in this way (not doing so) the inspiration will soon be restrained, distracted, dulled or obstructed, and how could one then represent in painting the appearance of things and of emotions?

It is like a workman making a *ch'in* (table harp or lute). He has found at I-yang a *wu-t'ung* tree; his hands are skilled, his thoughts mysterious, his mind quite clear on the point, and so while the tree (living material) still stands with branches and leaves untouched, he sees the lute made by Master Lei quite clearly before his eyes. But the man whose thoughts are troubled and whose body is worn out looks at the sharp chisels and knives and does not know where to begin. How could he accomplish the *Chiao-wei* lute¹ of the five notes and make its sounds reverberate with the clear wind and the running water? It is, indeed, as a man of former times said: a poem is a picture without form, a picture a poem in form. Wise men have often discussed this (saying), and we have made it our teacher.

I have therefore in my leisure hours looked through some poems of the Chin and T'ang periods and sometimes found among them excellent verses which express the things which are in man's heart, or the views which present themselves to his eyes.

But if I did not live in perfect harmony and ease and was seated at a bright window before a clean table burning a stick of incense to dispel all anxieties, the fine verses and excellent ideas did not take shape; the inner mood and beauty of their meaning was not realized in my thoughts. How can it then be said that the principal thing in painting is easily reached? When circumstances are ripe, the heart and the hand responsive, and one is starting with some horizontals and verticals or some central part, "taking from the right and the left and finding a source"—lo, a man of the world steps in, leads the thoughts astray and gives a rude shock to the feelings—then, all is out! Therefore I (Kuo Ssŭ) have recorded some of the beautiful verses by ancient poets, which my father used to recite, which contain excellent thoughts for painting.

(The author then quotes some verses of the T'ang and early part of the Sung dynasty, most of which may be read in Waley's translation.)

Hua Chieh (Secrets or Methods of Painting)

Whenever you are going to use the brush, you must first correlate the sky and the earth. This means that on a sheet which is 1'5 foot high, the upper part should be left for the sky, the lower part for the earth; between them one may develop the ideas of the scenery. I have seen beginners of the present day hastily grasping the brush, throwing down carelessly some ideas, shocking the feelings with their smearing and rubbing. When looking at their overfilled sheets the eyes get stuffed, the effect is very unpleasant. Works which are done in such light-hearted fashion cannot express anything high or great.

¹ *Chiao-wei* (scorched tail) alluding to a story of a lute made from a charred log of the *wu-t'ung* tree, which an enthusiast rescued for that purpose from the flames. Giles, *Dictionary*, 1317.

The man who made this famous lute, which produced sounds of unsurpassed beauty, was Ts'ai Yung of the later Han dynasty. Cf. Waley, op. cit., 192.

In painting landscapes one should first attend to the great mountain which is called the master-peak. When the master-peak is fixed, one may proceed with the secondary mountains near and far, large and small. It dominates the whole region, that is why it is called the master-peak. It is like a ruler among his officials.

In painting forests and rocks attend first to the great pine-tree which is called the leading master. When the idea of this leading master has been fixed, go on by making the crevices and small plants, the creepers and split rocks. Rising as a model on the mountain, it is like the superior man in the common crowd.

There are mountains covered with earth and mountains covered with stones. If the mud-hills have stones, the trees are thin and tall. If the stone-hills have mud, the trees are rich and luxuriant. There are trees growing on the mountains and trees growing in the water. The mountain trees, which grow in rich soil, are very tall pines. The water trees, which grow in slight soil, have many long shoots.

Among the waters there is the running water; among the stones or cliffs there are coiled up ones. The water may form cascades; the stones may be strangely shaped. The waterfalls are rushing through the forest. The strange stones are like tigers squatting at the side of the road.

Among the rains there is the rain which is on the point of falling and likewise the snow which is beginning to fall. There is the pouring rain and the heavy snow-fall and also the clearing after rain and after snow. Among the winds there is the hurricane. Among the clouds there are those which return home. The storm-wind blows up the sand and moves the stones. The thin clouds are like stretched out white gauze.

The inns and the cottages should be at the streams, but not leaning over the rushing torrents . . . because of the danger.

The villages should be placed on the open land easy to cultivate and not on mountains . . . difficult to reach and cultivate.

When using the brush one should not be used by it, and in using the ink one should not be used by the ink. The brush and the ink are superficial things, but how could those who do not know how to handle them accomplish anything really wonderful? The difficulty of handling the brush and the ink is the same as in calligraphy, which is of the same order as painting. Thus it has been said that Wang Yu-chün (Wang Hsi-chih) liked the geese; the movement of their turning necks seemed to him alike to the movement of a man's wrist when he is handling the brush. This applies to the use of the brush in painting just as well as in calligraphy. It is generally said that he who is good in the one is also good in the other of these two arts, because in both the movement of the wrist in using the brush must be easy and unobstructed. Someone may ask: what kind of ink should be used? to which my answer is: "Use either burnt ink or ink which has been stored over night, or faded ink, or dust-ink; if one kind is not satisfying, take another."

(In the following, various mixtures of ink are described and their use in different parts of the pictures; also how colouristic effects may be obtained, etc. These notes, as well as those concerning the various positions in which the brush may be kept, its "clinching", "pulling", "hitting", etc., are evidently of interest for the technical student, but they do not mean much to people with no practical experience in the handling of the Chinese brush and ink.)

The importance of Kuo Hsi's discussion of the aims and methods of landscape painting does not depend on any startling originality in his ideas. On the contrary, it seems most probable that his principal points of view are practically the same as those of all the great landscape painters of the Five Dynasties and Early Sung period. He explains what the others had practised and what he himself also tried to convey in pictorial form; he shows the road along which Chinese landscape

painting at that particular epoch had reached a relative degree of perfection, and by this his discussion becomes of very broad and general interest.

The fundamental point of view, which depends on the artist's intimate communion not only with objective appearances but with the very soul of nature, was also emphasized in the biographical records of the earlier painters and in the treatises which pass under the names of Ching Hao and Li Ch'êng, but it is developed by Kuo Hsi in a more thorough and rational way than in any of the earlier writings, and in terms which are coined by the artist himself and not by subsequent editors. The main parts of his treatise have a tone of personal experience and conviction, which adds a great deal to its significance.

Kuo Hsi's remarks seem to fall into two different classes; those which are made by the great artist who addresses himself to his son (and to other students of painting), and those spoken to the general public by the somewhat scholastic advocate of landscape painting; and it is particularly the latter which are supplemented by Kuo Ssü. The former have evidently a far greater artistic significance, but the latter lend a rather picturesque historical colour to his exposition. When he insists on the demand that the paintings should represent such places, where wise and virtuous men like to dwell and to idle, and that they should do it so that one actually feels like being in the woods or by the rivers without stepping out of the house, he places himself with the long row of Chinese scholars and philosophers who have advocated the greatness of painting by its power to supplant objective reality. It is a favourite argument of the Confucian scholars to whom art, too, needs to have a definite practical and intellectual purpose. Kuo Hsi's way of exposing this demand is, however, remarkably free from the intellectual dross of many later writers, and it is supported by the imaginative power that also runs through his somewhat detailed observations of nature and his discussions of motives and compositions. He is intrinsically an artist, not a philosopher or a chronicler.

The eclectic manner of study which he recommends was also a generally accepted theory among the best educated writers and painters of the Sung period. A good painter should know thoroughly all the best points of his predecessors; he should be familiar with their technical methods and thus reach a complete mastery in the handling of the instruments of his calling. His own style should be the result of wide experience and a thorough study based on classical models. Such was the main road; it may have lead to an over-production of empty repetitions, but out of this mass grew the masterpieces created by the men who, like Kuo Hsi, had walked to its end and reached freedom.

Among the observations that Kuo Hsi offers of the appearances and phenomena of nature, the mountains, the streams, the clouds and the mist are several which illustrate the remarkable realization of space and aerial perspective that we have noticed in all the great landscapes of this period. It is evident that Kuo Hsi, like his immediate predecessors, had a very definite conception not only of the significance of relative sizes and distances but also of the expressional value of space.

A large part of his comments and advice are devoted to this subject and to the methods by which it may be treated in painting, i.e. the light and shade effects, the atmosphere at different seasons and hours of the day, the sweeping mist that covers portions of the mountains, the water-courses that appear and disappear, the clouds and rain and other of the ever-changing phenomena that make the beholder realize that he stands in front of a revelation of a great mystery—a section of the infinite life. In describing these things as well as some of the principal forms of natural scenery such as the majestic mountain, which is enthroned like an emperor, the master-pine, which is the leader among the trees, the stones which are like squatting tigers at the road-side, the vegetation which forms the hair of the mountains, the home-going clouds, etc., Kuo Hsi does it in terms which seem to suggest that he considers all these manifestations almost like animate beings. They are presented with individual characteristics, and they play their parts quite actively in the great drama which is unrolled before the painter's eye: act after act, scene after scene at the various seasons, in the morning and in the evening, day and night. And the human beings which he introduces take part in the same drama, they accord themselves by their appearance, by their actions and expressions with the seasons and with the changing moods of the days. There is no essential difference between them and the trees and the mountains for the great landscape painter. They are all pervaded by the same consciousness, the same feeling of unity with nature, if this word is taken in its most general sense, including the spiritual as well as the material. The realization of this may be reached when the consciousness of the painter is in perfect harmony with that of nature. Then his representations will be convincing, and he will be able to express the essential character and significance of all the changing forms.¹

The right mental attitude of the painter is the main thing, and it is symbolically expressed by Chuang-tzŭ in the saying quoted by Kuo Hsi: "The painter takes off his clothes and sits crosslegged," which evidently means that the painter should divest himself of all exterior influences and reach absolute mental equipoise—only in this state of aloofness and harmony will he be able to grasp the inner meaning of things. This is essential, because everything must be represented in accordance with its inner nature, the æsthetic significance which only the real artist can see or sense and reveal in his work. He may discover it in the forms of the objective world as the great lute-maker who saw the wonderful lute in the growing tree (or, like Michaelangelo, who saw the shape of his statue in the marble-block).

The work by which this inner form or significance is made manifest in a

¹ This was also the interpretation given to Kuo Ssŭ's treatise by his contemporaries, as for instance, Têng Ch'ün, who writes (in *Hua Chi*): "Innumerable things with all their details may be rendered through the intelligent use of the brush, but there is only one way in which their character can be fully expressed. Which is it? It is the transmitting of the spirit. People think that men alone have spirit (soul); they do not realize, that everything is ensouled. Thus Jo-Hsü (Kuo Ssŭ) scorned the works of common men; he said that though they were called paintings, they were not painting (as art). Therefore the manner of painting which possesses spirit-harmony (ch'i-yün) and life-movement (shen tung) is the foremost."

painting must not be forced or hurried. It cannot be done when the body is tired or the mind distracted, because then the picture will become weak, sketchy, or loose. The painter must choose the right moment, both from the psychological and the material point of view, and then work with utmost concentration, putting his whole soul into the work. Kuo Ssü gives a vivid description of the severity of the task, the mental energy needed to surmount all the outer obstructions and inner difficulties, and he makes us realize that the final picture, which may have the appearance of being thrown down lightly, is the result of a long and repeated struggle. And this applies not only to the technical execution, it is also a matter of character, concentration, mode of life.

Similar ideas have also been expressed by Leonardo, for instance, when he says: "The painter ought to be solitary in order that the well-being of the body may not sap the vigour of the mind," etc., and they have been realized by many of the great artists in the West as well as in the East, but they have seldom been put into practice with more devotion than by the landscape painters at the beginning of the Sung period. To them painting was not only poetry in form, as often said; it was also truth, a manifestation of a spiritual reality which existed in their own consciousness and from this source was reflected in great works of art.

(4) *Mi Fei and Su Tung-p'o and their Circle*

If Kuo Hsi may be called the consummator of the traditional style of landscape painting, which reached its culmination in the Northern Sung period, his somewhat younger contemporary, Mi Fei went his own way as a landscape painter, working in a manner which had little in common with the styles of his predecessors. Mi Fei's importance as a landscape painter has been much extolled by later critics, and his position as one of the foremost representatives of the "Southern School" particularly emphasized, yet, it may be questioned whether his glory would ever have become so great among his countrymen had it not been for his extraordinary qualities as a critic, a writer and calligraphist. He was, indeed, a most interesting personality, but his painting formed only a minor part of his creative activity.

His name was originally Mi Fu, but he changed the second character of his name to another (霁), which may be pronounced Fei as well as Fu, and became henceforth popularly known as Mi Fei. His *tzü* was Yüan-chang, his *hao* Nan-kung, but he was also called Mi Hsiang-yang, apparently after the place where he was born in 1051.¹ We are told that he was an extremely precocious boy with a great fondness for arts and letters. His faculty of memorizing was truly Chinese: at the age of six he could learn 100 poems a day, and by going over them again, he could recite them all. He enjoyed the particular favour of the Emperor Jên Tsung's

¹ This is the statement in *Mi Hsiang-yang Chih Lin* (quoted in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, ix, 11, 27-30), which contains the fullest biographical data about Mi Fei. In *Hua Chi* it is stated that Mi Fei's father moved from T'ai-yüan (Shansi) to Wu (Kiangsu), where the son would have been born.

consort (in whose service his mother was employed), and was first appointed as a Reviser of Books. Then he held successively the following official posts: Professor in the Bureau of Ceremonies, Governor of Ch'ang-chou (Kiangsu), Professor of Calligraphy and Painting in the capital, Secretary of the Board of Rites, and Military Governor of Huai-yang (Kiangsu). The frequent changes are said to have been caused by the fact that his tongue was often too sharp and his genius could never submit to the rules of officialdom.¹ His character was, like his style of writing, firm and upright "like the mast of a sailing craft in the wind", to use a metaphor of his great friend Su Tung-p'o. He died from an ulcer in the head at the early age of 56.

Mi Fei's striking appearance and easy manners were furthermore accentuated by his habit of dressing according to the mode of the T'ang dynasty. "Anyone would be able to recognize him even though he had never seen the artist before," and wherever he went, he attracted a crowd. His fondness of cleanliness became also proverbial. We are told that he used to have water standing at his side when working; he washed his face very often, though without using a towel, but he would never wash in the same vessel, or put on the same clothes that somebody else had used before.

Mi Fei's ruling passion ever since his early youth was the collecting of old writings and paintings. When a boy he was supported in this by his mother, who sold her hair-ornaments to secure him means for the purpose. The fortune he inherited was gradually lost on relatives, but he continued to collect and made every possible sacrifice to secure the specimens he wanted. To what extent he was dominated by this desire is illustrated by the anecdote, according to which Mi Fei, when he once was out in a boat with some friends, was shown a calligraphy by Wang Hsi-chih (the great fourth century writer), and this made him so excited that he threatened to jump overboard unless the owner made him a present of it; which consequently could not be refused.² No wonder, that Mi Fei's collection of writings and paintings gradually became a treasure-house of the first magnitude and his simple abode a meeting-place for the greatest scholars of the time. "He was staying in a very poor house in the capital. When guests arrived he treated them to tea and showed them some of his art-treasures. The time was then happily spent in writing and chanting poems in praise of the pictures." But as some of his guests were inspired rather by curiosity than by connoisseurship and evidently lacked veneration for the precious documents, he arranged his pictures in two series, one that could be shown to everybody and one that was kept for a few selected friends. He explains this as follows: "The reason why I kept a secret collection, was my fear that the people might touch the pictures with their fingers

¹ According to *Mi Hsiang-yang Chih Lin*, he was very capable as an official, but fond of criticizing and admonishing his subordinates; it is furthermore said that he did not want to follow the ways of the world; his actions were at times eccentric, and as a result of this he met with repeated misfortune as an official.

² Cf. Giles, *op. cit.*, p. 131, after an unnamed Chinese source.

or wipe them with their sleeves. Incidentally such things happened, and I had to clean the pictures afterwards, but as the paper was quite thin, the pictures could not stand many cleanings. Anybody who touched a scroll out of curiosity brought it thus nearer to its destruction.”¹

In his *Hua Shih* Mi Fei refers quite often to specimens in his own collection, which was partly inherited, but mostly composed of pictures he had acquired:—

“The collection of my family contained a great number of old specimens of the Chin and T’ang periods. I discarded from it a hundred scrolls; nowadays it contains only ten really fine specimens, but when I find some more wonderful things I keep on adding to it.

“Paintings of the Chin period should be carefully preserved, because such things are very rare. I named my studio *Pao Chin Chai* (the Studio of Chin Treasures). Whenever I enter it, I hang such things on the wall; there is nothing comparable to them of the present day.

“The prices of old writings and paintings should not be discussed. Scholars do not like to acquire such things for money; they prefer to exchange them between themselves, which is a more refined way. When a man of to-day obtains such an old specimen it seems to him as important as his life, which is ridiculous. It is in accordance with human nature that things which satisfy the eye, when seen for a long time become boring; therefore they should be exchanged for fresh examples, which then appear doubly satisfying. This is the intelligent way of using pictures.”

The extraordinary care and thoughtfulness with which Mi Fei selected and handled his artistic treasures are illustrated by a number of passages in the same book, as for instance, the following:—

“I have in my studio a great many landscapes by old and modern friends and teachers, but very few of these rise above the common level. They are mostly things done in a hurry; mist and clouds, shade and light, trees and stones are not worked out thoughtfully in detail. When at a convenient time some connoisseur asks me (to show pictures), I take out such that are no more than 3 feet wide or 3 feet high and hang them in pairs in my studio. When not exceeding 3 feet, the mount of the pictures does not reach the chairs, and men can pass clear before them without touching them with their shoulders. I particularly avoid the large pictures and do not show any of those which are commonly called *Li Ch’êng* and *Kuan T’ung*.”

Nobody could make Mi Fei forget his strict principles as a collector.

“When Chancellor T’ang Chih-tung wanted to see my collection, I told him of my conditions. He agreed. I had two tables placed side by side and spread on them white paper and silk. I washed my hands and took out the scrolls myself from their respective cases and unrolled them for the visitor to see. He sat in front of the table with folded arms examining the scrolls with ease and care; when he said: ‘Open,’ I opened the scroll, and when he said: ‘Roll,’ I rolled. He sat there looking grand and dignified, while I ran about like a servant; and this I was willing to do in order to save my scrolls from being touched by his fingers or sleeves.”

This vivid illustration of Mi Fei’s life as a collector and his passion for artistic values is complemented by another anecdote in the *Shih Lin Pi Shu Lu*,² recording a visit of his friend Su Tung-p’o:—

¹ Quoted from Mi Fei’s *Yüeh Shu Tieh* in *Ch’ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. ix, l. 35.

² Quoted in *Ch’ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. ix, l. 39.

"Once he invited Su Tung-p'o to dinner. Two long tables were placed facing each other, and on them were piled fine brushes, exquisite ink and 300 sheets of paper, with some food and drink at the side. When Tung-p'o saw this arrangement, he laughed heartily. Between each drink they would flatten the paper and write. Two page boys were kept busy grinding the ink, but they could hardly keep on making enough of it. Towards evening the wine was giving out, and so was the paper. Then each of them took the other's papers and said good-bye. Afterwards they found that they never had done better writing."

Writing or calligraphy was to these men something comparable to musical or poetical composition. It required an alertness of spirit and nerve, which they were wont to increase by the enjoyment of wine. By this they reached a state of exhilaration rather than drunkenness. Su Tung-p'o himself says that it was only in this state that he could write well the large grass characters and also the "small model characters". His admiration for Mi Fei as a writer seems to have been most profound; he likens Mi Fei's brush to a sharp sword handled with consummate skill in fighting, or to a strong bow that could shoot the arrow a thousand *li*, piercing anything that may be in its way. "It was the highest perfection of the art of calligraphy. It was like Chung Yu (Tzū-lu) before he met Confucius—very aggressive and fond of fighting." Other writers claim that it was only Mi Fei who could successfully imitate not only the shapes but the very spirit of the firm and bold style of the Six Dynasties; his way of writing "was like riding a noble steed, which advances and returns easily without the use of bit or whip", free and natural, strong and firm.

It may not be necessary to repeat here the practical advice that Mi Fei offered to students who asked him about the secrets of good brush-work. They represent experiences and technicalities which hardly can be appreciated by Westerners who never have handled a Chinese brush. To Mi Fei the brush was not only the sword of his soul but a magic rod, which imparted life whenever he wielded it, be it in writing or painting; the two arts were to him essentially one and the same.

If we may believe Têng Ch'un, who wrote his *Hua Chi* about half a century after Mi Fei's death, the artist made most of his paintings during the last seven years of his life. The statement may be exaggerated, but it is worth quoting, particularly as it is given in words which are supposed to be Mi Fei's own: "From the time when Li Po-shih was taken ill in his right arm I started to paint.¹ As Li always studied Wu Tao-tzū, he could at last not free himself from the master, but I choose the great and old-fashioned Ku K'ai-chih (as a model) and did not make one stroke like Wu's. Nor was the effect of Li's brush-work very high. I painted the eyes, the faces, and the structure (of my figures) guided by my own genius and not by any teacher, and I represented the loyal men of antiquity."

It may be that the above statement refers in particular to figure painting, which

¹ Li Kung-lin was taken ill about 1100 by severe rheumatism, which forced him to keep in bed and practically abstain from painting.

was the special field of Li Kung-lin, but even so, it is surprising by the very critical tone in regard to Wu Tao-tzŭ and Li Kung-lin and by the vindication of Ku K'ai-chih as a model. Mi Fei may, indeed, have felt the greatest admiration for Ku as a representative of the refined and old-fashioned style, which always appealed to his sensitive taste, and he may have copied Ku as he copied many of the early masters, but he could hardly have followed in his footsteps as a painter. The additional remarks that he painted according to his own genius and was not guided by any old masters, seem more to the point; in this respect he was, no doubt, more independent than Li Kung-lin. But whether he was a greater creative genius than Li (as he himself would like us to believe) is a different question, which we nowadays are hardly in a position to answer.

The pictures which still pass under the name of Mi Fei are, without exception, very suggestive renderings of clouds and mist around mountains and trees, but rather lacking in structural form and draughtsmanship. A consequence of this peculiarity and of his great fame are the numerous imitations made of his works from early times, which are often said to have been exceedingly close to the originals. We must therefore leave the question open whether any of the beautiful paintings, mentioned below, which carry Mi Fei's seal and signature, are his own works or those of some close follower like the son, Mi Yu-jên, "who had the spirit and the manner of his father," or Kao K'o-kung, or Fang Fang-hu, two highly gifted painters who continued his manner in the Yüan period, not to mention later imitators.

The pictures represent, as a rule, ranges of wooded hills or rounded mountain peaks rising out of layers of woolly mist. At their feet may be water—sometimes broadening into open vistas—and closer towards the foreground clusters of dark trees, waving like big plumes against the white mist. The elements of design and the manner of execution in these pictures are quite typical, but the individual accents are not very definite.

A good example of this class of landscape is a short scroll belonging to the National Museum in Peking (often exhibited in Wên-hua tien), which is provided with a number of imperial seals and with writings by Ch'ien Lung. It is carried out in the characteristic blotchy style with effective contrasts of light and dark tones, but it can hardly be more than an imitation or a copy after some composition by the master. (Pl. 4.)

A still softer rendering of a similar motive—mountains enveloped in vaporous mist and stretches of quiet water—is the beautiful scroll now in the collection of Mrs. William H. Moore, in New York. It carries an inscription by the painter and a date corresponding to A.D. 1103. A stronger brush is revealed by the small hanging picture, known as *Spring Mountains and Pine Trees*, in the Palace Museum in Peking.¹ (Pl. 5.) It carries the seal and signature of the painter, besides several

¹ Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. i, pl. 12. Size: 1 ft. 9 in. by 1 ft. 3 in. The inscription by Emperor Kao Tsung is at the top of the scroll. Mentioned in *Shi Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

imperial seals and a poetic inscription by the Emperor Kao Tsung. It may be an original, though somewhat worn, if we may judge by the reproduction, and thus devoid of some of its original suggestiveness. The most beautiful of all the "Mi Fei" pictures known to me is, however, the large *Mountain Scenery* in the Freer Gallery, which also bears the painter's seal and signature. (Pl. 6.) The picture is not well preserved, but it is a thing of remarkable artistic quality. The mountains which rise through the thick layers of mist have a definite structure in spite of all their softness, and the dark trees in the foreground make a wonderful colour-effect against the white vaporous haze that fills the valley. It might well be a somewhat ruined work by the master, though it is difficult to make any assertion in this respect as long as we have no safe starting point for judging his individual brush-work.

The method in which these pictures are executed is essentially coloristic, though carried out in a monochrome medium; it is based on tonal values and takes advantage of the special possibilities of Indian ink. It verifies the statement of a Chinese critic who wrote: "Colouring in a true pictorial sense does not mean a mere application of variegated pigments. The natural aspect of an object can be beautifully conveyed by ink-colour, if one knows how to produce the required shades."¹ We are also told that Mi Fei "in painting with ink did not necessarily use the brush; he sometimes used paper-sticks or sugar-cane, from which the juice had been extracted, or a calyx of the lotus. He always painted on paper which had not been prepared with gum or alum; never on silk or on the wall. If we see pictures done on silk attributed to Mi Fei, we may be sure that they are not by him. Neither he nor his son used anything of the kind".²

A beautiful characterization of Mi Fei's manner as a painter is offered by Têng Ch'un in his *Hua Chi*:—

"His writings are quite numerous, but his pictures are rare. I have only seen two specimens which belonged to Li Chi (*tzu*, Yüan-tsun). One of them was on paper and represented the branches of a winding pine-tree. It was executed in light ink, and all the innumerable needles of the tree were massed together as in a lump of iron. I have never seen any old or modern picture quite like it. The writing on the picture said: 'When we travelled together with Li Ta-kuan, the learned scholar, on the moon-lit lake, each one composed some rhymes of poetry, but Fei (I) made a poem without sound; it was in the night, as we rowed together on the Western Lake' . . . The other picture represented plum, pine, epidendrum, and chrysanthemum all united on a sheet of paper. The stalks and leaves of the plants were intertwined but not confused. There appeared to be many brush-strokes, but seen close they were few; yet it was not a coarse or careless work. It was altogether of a superior and extraordinary quality; the most wonderful thing of the whole period."

Although Mi Fei was principally a landscape painter, we noticed above that he also did portraits and figure paintings of an old-fashioned type; among them are particularly mentioned some remarkable self-portraits. One of these carried an

¹ By Shên Chieh-chou (a critic of the K'ang Hsi era), quoted by S. Taki in *Three Essays on Oriental Painting*, London, 1910, p. 66.

² *Tung T'ien Ching Lu*, quoted in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*.

inscription by his son which said: "My father used to draw the portraits of great officials and virtuous scholars of the Chin and T'ang dynasties and hang these on the walls of his studio. They were copied by men who loved the ancient times, and thus transmitted to our days."

Mi Fei must have spent much more time in studying specimens of ancient painting and calligraphy than in producing pictures of his own. His *Hua Shih*¹ (History of Painting) is filled with notices about pictures which he has seen all over the country and about early and contemporary masters, and it also contains practical advice as to the proper way of keeping, cleaning, and mounting pictures, etc., but very little that could serve to throw light on his own methods or brush-work. It is the work of a rather scornful critic and collector, who loves to ridicule people for their indiscriminate way of judging and collecting pictures. A few characteristic passages may be quoted to show the general tone of the work and its writer. Thus he speaks about the collectors:—

"There are many excellent pictures without artist's names, but people of to-day are very liberal in giving names to them. Consequently they call all paintings of oxen Tai Sung and paintings of horses Han Kan, playing with these names like saying *hao* (cranes) of Tu Hsün and *hsiang* (elephants) of Chang Tê."²

He makes also a distinction between true connoisseurs and ambitious amateurs:

"It happens quite often when pictures are shown to present-day people that they are given names of old masters which fit them more or less, as they are resembling the correctly-named works. Yet, amateurs and students form two different classes of people. To the latter may be counted those who are earnest in their love of painting, who have studied extensively and recorded their observations. They have taken it into their hearts, or they have learned how to paint themselves. What they collect is consequently of a high order. But those present-day people who possess wealth without a great love of painting and whose ambition it is to pose as connoisseurs in the eyes or the ears of other people may be called amateurs. They place their pictures in silk bags and provide them with jade-rollers as if they were most wonderful treasures, but when they open them, one may break down with laughter. I must take hold of the table and shout loudly: 'What a shame to take the trouble of killing people.' " (Killing their good reputation by false attributions.)

This exclamation became afterwards a common saying among connoisseurs when they were shown false pictures.

The discriminating collector Mi Fei gives sometimes good advice for the proper preservation, mounting, and cleaning of pictures:—

"When you get hold of an old picture which is not damaged, you do not need to remount it; if the preservation is not good, you should change the mount and the backing once. If you change the mounting several times, the picture will be ruined, because the spirit of the figures, the variegated colours of their hair, the charm of the luxuriant flowers, the fluttering bees and butterflies, are merely suggestions among the dark and light; they may be lost if the picture passes through several remountings."

¹ There are several reprints of Mi Fei's *Hua Shih*. The earliest known to me is the late Ming edition, included in *Chin Tai Pi Shu* and in *Wang Shih Hua Yüan*.

² This is a play on words. The writer has chosen two names, Tu Hsün-hao and Chang Tê-hsiang and implies that these should of course be used for pictures of cranes and elephants, because they contain the characters signifying cranes and elephants.

In other passages he goes into details about the best method of cleaning ancient scrolls, and tells us why certain things must be mounted on paper and others on silk, etc. But these deliberations are perhaps of a too technical nature to be quoted in this connection. More interesting from a historical point of view are the observations which he notes down about the different types of silk, used in the successive periods:—

“Up to the beginning of the T'ang dynasty raw silk was used for paintings. Wu Tao-tzū, Chou Fang, Han Kan and their followers soaked the silk in hot water and half boiled it with rice powder and pounded it into something like a silver plate. On this the figures appeared very fine and brilliant. Collectors of to-day should pay attention to the silk; if it is of a coarse grade, the pictures cannot be of the T'ang period; they are not right. The paintings by Chang Sêng-yu and Yen Li-pên, which still remain, are all on raw silk; those of the South T'ang dynasty are on coarse silk. Hsü Hsi's silk is almost like cotton cloth.”

Mi Fei's admiration for the old masters was as deep and sincere as his attitude towards the contemporary painters was scornful and critical. One is almost inclined to ask, if the lack of historical perspective or personal bias and ambition did not sometimes blind the critic, though it must be admitted that his classification of the painters is practically the same which has been accepted by the best critics of later times:—

“Intelligent people easily distinguish Ku K'ai-chih's, Lu T'an-wei's, Wu Tao-tzū's and Chou Fang's figure paintings, T'êng Ch'ang-yu's,¹ Pien Luan's, Hsü Hsi's, T'ang Hsi-ya's,² and Chu Ch'iu's³ flower-, bamboo, and bird-paintings, Ching Hao's, Li Ch'êng's, Kuan T'ung's, Tung Yuan's, Fan K'uan's, Chü-jan's and Liu Tao-shih's⁴ landscapes, Tai Sung's oxen, Ts'ao Pa's, Han Kan's and Wei Yen's horses, but the pictures by modern painters are difficult to distinguish on account of their great mutual similarity. They are hardly worth discussing seriously. Chao Ch'ang, Wang Yu (Chao's pupil), Hsün Hung⁵ and their likes can be used to hang on the wall, but a few of them are quite enough; Ch'êng T'an,⁶ Ts'ui Po, Hou Fêng,⁷ Ma Fên, Chang Tzū-fang and their likes are good only for defiling the walls of tea houses and wine shops; they may be hung together with Chou Yüeh's and Chung-i's 'grass' writings. They do not belong to the class of men whom I discuss; even nameless and unclassified old specimens of brush-work may be esteemed as better friends.”

The painters whom Mi Fei esteemed the least were those who specialized in animals and birds; he writes in another passage:—

“The study of Buddhist paintings implies some moral advice; they are of a superior kind. Then follow landscapes, which possess inexhaustible delights, particularly when they have haze, clouds and mist effects; they are beautiful. Then come pictures of

¹ T'êng Ch'ang-yu from Wu, later active in Shu. Five dynasties. Flowers and birds, particularly plum blossoms.

² T'ang Hsi-ya, of the South T'ang state. Rival of Hsü Hsi; painted bamboo, flowers and insects.

³ Chu Ch'iu, a painter of the late T'ang period.

⁴ Liu Tao-shih, North Sung per. A Taoist who is said to have forgotten his name. Pupil of Chü-jan.

⁵ Hsün Hung. North Sung per. Pupil of Wang Yu. Active in Ch'êng-tu. Flowers and fruits.

⁶ Ch'êng T'an. North Sung per. Painter of pines and bamboo; inferior as figure painter.

⁷ Hou Fêng. North Sung. Academy painter of landscapes; followed in the wake of Kuo Hsi.

The rest of the above-named painters are discussed in our text.

flowers and grass. As to pictures of men and women, birds and animals, they are for the amusement of officials and do not belong to the class of pure art treasures."

This pronouncement sounds almost as an opposition to the movement for faithful naturalistic representation of flowers and birds which was steadily growing in importance and reached its culmination in Hui Tsung's Academy organized a few years before Mi Fei's death. The æsthetic ideals which, as told before, became officially accepted, not to say enforced, in this institution were evidently not those of Mi Fei; he belonged fundamentally to another camp. The Taoistic vagaries, which in the Hui Tsung era received fresh life through the personal interest of the emperor, must have been as foreign to his critical nature as officialdom was boring to his soul. The collectors whom he ridicules and the painters he scorns were just the type of men that would flock around the imperial expert and artist whom we have characterized in a previous chapter. Mi Fei may, indeed, have known more about this growing officialdom in matters of art and about the pretentious masterpieces in the imperial collection than he transmits in his written words, but what he says is enough to make us realize that the artistic culture of official circles was built on rather hollow foundations, and that there existed a wholesome opposition to it at least as long as Mi Fei lived.¹

His own painted works do not seem to have entered the imperial collections until much later times. It was only in the Yüan period that he was chosen as a model by some landscape painters; and his great fame and particular position in the history of Chinese art were finally established in the Ming period when the representatives of the *Wên-jên hua* (Literary Men's Painting) discovered in Mi Fei, not without reason, one of their most brilliant predecessors. He became then, as pointed out before, one of the main pillars of the "Southern School", that puzzling product of the Chinese craze for abstract classification which, no doubt, would have seemed as useless to Mi Fei as all the other attempts to bring art into the shackles of programmes and rules.

Mi Fei's style of landscape painting was continued by his son Mi Yu-jên, who may have done some of the paintings which pass under the father's name. He is often called by his *tzŭ*, Yüan-hui, a name given to him by Huang T'ing-chien, the great scholar and friend of his father, who as a calligraphist was hardly inferior to Mi Fei. (Pl. 7.)² According to Têng Ch'un (who still may have known the younger Mi personally), Huang possessed an old seal with the two characters *yüan hui*

¹ Yet, Mi Fei was also to some extent drawn within the magic circle of the Emperor Hui Tsung's artistic interests. He presented the emperor with some famous specimens of calligraphy and painting from his own collection, and was "amply rewarded with gold and money". He was sometimes admitted to the imperial collection, but does not seem to have been a member of the Academy of Painting, nor is he mentioned in the *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*.

² Huang T'ing-chien's proud and noble character, which is reflected in his style of writing, is well characterized by his words: "If a man is commonplace there is no hope for him. Those who are not commonplace behave under ordinary circumstances like ordinary people; but when some crisis arrives, their real value is made evident. He called himself Shan-ku Tao-jên, the Taoist of Mountains and Vales." (Giles, *Biographical Dict.*, no. 873.)

(original splendour), which he gave to the young Mi with the following explanation: "I could not make up my mind to give this seal to my children; but you are like a young tiger; the strength of your brush is enough to carry a tripod. Take it and make Yüan-hui your *tzŭ*. Follow always in the footsteps of your father." Mi Yu-jên accepted the advice as well as he could. His air and manners were those of his father; "his landscapes were painted in the dotted manner, the mist and clouds were done quite roughly but without loss of their natural effect."

But Mi Yu-jên was not only a skilful painter, he was also a successful official who rose to the vice-presidency of the Kung-pu (Board of Works) and basked in the imperial sunshine. Unlike his father, he was proud of it; his self-esteem increased in proportion to his worldly success: When he had risen to a high rank, he no longer associated with the old friends and did not give away his pictures as he had done in earlier years. Then the people jeered at him and said: "He can make rootless trees and massed clouds, but only for the emperor—not for common men."

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang possessed a picture by Mi Yu-jên representing *The White Clouds at the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*, which he esteemed very highly and once brought along when he went boating on the Tung-t'ing lake (into which the two rivers flow). He then made the following observation: "The rays of the sun were slanting, and when I looked out from under the matted roof of the house-boat into the far expanse, I found that the strangely shaped clouds were the same as in the ink-painting by Mi. In after-times, at the approach of evening, I rolled up the bamboo blinds of my window and looked at the same picture, and it appeared to me then as something quite superfluous (so close was it to nature). The strange clouds of the Hsiang River are very similar to Kuo Hsi's snow mountains and the open sandy plains at their foot are as painted with watery ink in blobs like the works by the older and the younger Mi. The old saying that Kuo Hsi painted his mountains like clouds is not wrong." In the continuation of the same paragraph Tung Ch'i-ch'ang points out that Mi Yüan-hui was less interested in the mountains than in the clouds, and that such motifs can be properly represented only by artists who have reached the complete repose in which all passions dissolve. The two Mi had at that time become established ideals of the *Wên-jên hua*.

The great admiration expressed by Su Tung-p'o in some of the above-quoted passages for Mi Fei as a calligraphist and a painter was evidently reciprocated by Mi Fei, who had the highest regard for Su Shih's paintings of bamboo and old trees as well as for his calligraphic masterpieces. (Pl. 8.) The two friends were kindred spirits, inspired by similar ideas, even though Su Shih was less of a professional artist than Mi Fei. His ambition was rather to be the perfect amateur or gentleman scholar who wrote and painted when at leisure from official duties and had enjoyed enough wine to make him feel unhampered by the troubles of the world. Then "the old gentleman and Han-lin scholar vomited ink", as expressed by his friend Huang T'ing-chien. This condition was evidently a *sine qua non* for

his creative work; he says himself that it was only "when his dry bowels had obtained wine" that he "felt the irresistible desire to paint the bamboos on the snow white walls."¹ It had all to be done in the flash of a fleeting inspiration, like an act of the Creator himself, by which the secret of life was revealed in a few strokes with the brush. He returns often to this point in his critical comments and poems: Painting should not be a representation of form but a revelation of the inner life or soul that animates the forms. He was a poet by nature, and it mattered little whether he expressed himself in the abstract symbols of written characters or in the pictorial shapes of trees and bamboos—the spirit was the same and so was the rhythm of the brush.²

One or two characteristic passages from Su Tung-p'o's writings must here suffice to convey an idea about his position as an artist and a critic. In his notes about certain paintings in the Ching-yin hall he writes:—

"In paintings of human figures, birds, palaces, and objects everything should possess a constant form. As to mountains, rocks, bamboos, woods, water, waves, and clouds, they do not possess a constant form, but they have their constant principle (eternal fitness). When the constant form is misrepresented, people know it at once, but when the constant principle is not properly expressed, even those who know about painting do not easily perceive it. Therefore all the cheats and make-believes take advantage of this. However, misrepresentation in form does not necessarily mean that the whole thing is bad, but if the constant principle is not properly expressed, the whole picture will be deplorable. . . . Sometimes mere artisans may represent perfect forms, but they will never be able to give the principle; that can be done only by the superior man and gifted scholar." (Tung-p'o, *Chuan Chi*, vol. v.)

Su Tung-p'o evidently did various kinds of landscapes and studies of nature, as for instance, *A Flat River-bank*, *A Fallen Pine-tree*, *The Blue Cliffs*, etc., but what he loved above everything else were bamboos and water, two motives which express, each in its way, a peculiar combination of suppleness and strength. He has painted these motives, and he has made notes about them in which he again emphasizes the demand for the essential significance, the inner life, or what he in the above quotation calls the "constant principle". He says about water:—

"In ancient and modern pictures water is usually represented flat and far-stretching with quite small ruffles. Even the very skilful painters did no more than make the tops of the waves rising and falling; men could almost touch them with their hands and feel the heights and the hollows. They are said to be wonderful; yet, they are little better than prints from wooden blocks. In the Kuang-ming era (880) of the T'ang dynasty there was a retired scholar called Sun Wei,³ who first conceived a new idea: he painted rushing torrents and raging waves breaking against rocks and twisting around mountainous shores, adopting themselves to the shapes of the barriers.

¹ Cf. *Hua Chi*; notes about Su Tung-p'o.

² Su Tung-p'o's highly poetic appreciation of Wang Wei's wall painting in K'ai-yüan ssü in Fêng-hsiang, previously quoted, may also be recalled in this connection. He was probably one of the men who contributed most to the ever-growing idealization of Wang Wei as a poet-painter.

³ Sun Wei, also known as Yü from Tung-yüeh, a prominent painter at the end of the ninth century, known for his Taoist and Buddhist paintings as well as for his seascapes. He is said to have reached the knowledge of Tao.

He painted the ever-changing aspects (revolutions) of water and may be called a divine master.”¹

If water was to Su Shih a mirror of the constant flow of life or of its ever-changing aspects, the bamboo was a symbol of the aspiration of his soul. Its elastic strength, its power to yield and to bend before the storm without breaking, have from early times made it a much beloved expression for the Chinese ideal of a noble and scholarly character. It is a notable fact that some of the greatest calligraphists in China have been specialists of bamboo painting, probably not only because of the symbolism of the motive but also because the bamboo offers a particular opportunity for the exposition of superior brush-work. And it may well be said, that none of the scholars and artists who painted bamboo, did it without expressing by such works a reflection of their mental or spiritual aspirations.

Su Tung-p'o's way of painting bamboo has been well described by Mi Fei in the following passage:—

“Su Shih, Tzū-chan, painted his bamboos in ink with one stroke of the brush from the ground to the top. I asked him, why he did not paint them in sections (divided by joints)? To which he answered: ‘Do the bamboos grow in sections?’ His brilliant ideas he took over from Wên T'ung (Yü-k'o); indeed, he said himself that he picked the same fragrant flowers as Wên. The manner of using deep ink in the foreground and diluted ink towards the background was first introduced by Wên-k'o. He painted a bamboo forest in a very fine style. Tzū-chan made also a picture of an old dry tree with trunk and branches bending like dragons and masses of sharp and cracked stones. The queerest things were indeed coiled up in his chest. When I left Hunan on business and passed through Hang-chou, I saw for the first time the gentleman drunk, and he said to me: ‘Spread this paper on the wall, it is Kuan-yin paper.’ Then he rose and painted for me two bamboos and a dry tree together with some strange stones. But this picture was borrowed by Chieh-chü and never returned.” (Mi Shih, *Hua Shih*.)

Bamboo paintings attributed to Su Tung-p'o are not unfrequently met with in China, but most of them are, no doubt, imitations. The master was an ideal model to later generations. One of the most beautiful examples known to me is the picture belonging to Mr. Ku Ho-i, which was included in the exhibition of Chinese paintings in Tokyo, 1928. (Pl. 9.) It represents a single stalk of bamboo, rising tall and supple in a slightly curving S-line, supporting a few branches with leaves, which are spreading like the pointed wings of swallows. Around it are poetic inscriptions by the master and his admirers.

Wên T'ung, *tzū*, Yü-k'o, to whom Mi Fei refers in the above-quoted passage, was a close friend of Su Tung-p'o, who died at an early age in 1079. He was considered the most perfect and original of all the bamboo painters and a character of unusual nobility. Su Tung-p'o grieved bitterly at his death and wrote several poems and colophons on his pictures, among which the following may be quoted:—

¹ Cf. *Hua Hsüeh Hsin Yin*, i, l. 48. For other quotations from Su Tung-p'o, for instance regarding portrait painting, see Giles, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-20.

"The bending bamboos growing at the home of the prefect of Ling-yang,¹ by the cliffs to the North, were real hill bamboos. One of them had not thrown off its sheets and was eaten by worms; the other was hemmed in at a steep crevice. When my regretted friend saw these two, he was impressed and made a picture of them. I obtained this ink-sketch and took it to the Yü-ts'ê kung, asking to have it engraved on stone, so that the strange and rare sight may move the hearts and startle the eyes of connoisseurs and make them realize the noble character of my regretted friend, who was grieved and bent down, but not distressed, just like these bamboos."²

The significance of bamboo painting and the artistic characteristics of Wên Yü-k'ô could hardly be better expressed.

The extraordinary enthusiasm for Wên T'ung as a bamboo painter, which seems to have increased the more as his works became rare and difficult to trace, found the most eloquent interpreter in Li K'an, a painter of the Yüan period, who spent more than ten years searching for pictures by Wên T'ung and who, when he finally succeeded, considered it the greatest blessing that Heaven had bestowed on him. In his essay on bamboo painting, *Chu P'u* (to which we will return later), he places Wên T'ung in a class of his own and characterizes him as the sun outshining all the minor lights, to wit: "Until the Sung period there was a gradual development; then at last Wên T'ung appeared like a bright sun on the sky and all the torches lost their light. It was like the striking of a big bell, by which the sounds of all the clay-kettles was drowned. He was brave and strong, grand and noble, as explained by Su Tung-p'ô, who venerated him during his whole life."

If pictures by Wên T'ung were rare already in the South Sung and Yüan periods, they became still more difficult to find in later times. A fine example has, however, survived in the imperial collections and is now to be seen in the Palace Museum in Peking. (Pl. 10.)³ It represents a large hanging branch of bamboo, placed diagonally across the sheet, and carries the painter's signature and inscriptions by two later men (4 ft. 1 in. by 3 ft. 3 in.). The motive is far more luxuriantly developed than in Su Tung-p'ô's bamboo painting; the abundant leaves form layers upon layers, yet, so skilfully has the painter modulated the ink-tones that every leaf stands out quite clear and definite. Every stroke of the brush reflects nerve and decision; no wonder that later painters considered his technique unsurpassed.

Wên T'ung also painted landscapes "not inferior to Wang Wei's" and "resembling those of Kuan T'ung".⁴ If their designs and brush-work was as great as that in his bamboo paintings, they must have been marvellous creations. The only landscape I know which is ascribed to Wên T'ung, is a short horizontal scroll in the Metropolitan Museum, called *Wan Hsia t'u* (Evening Haze), which also bears the painter's signature and seal.

It is a beautiful picture with fine atmospheric tones, but the execution seems

¹ Wên T'ung served for some time as local governor of Ling-yang.

² Tung-p'ô, *Chuan Chi*, vol. 70.

³ Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. xi, pl. 9.

⁴ Cf. Waley, *Index*, p. 100.

rather too dry and finicky to be by a Sung master like Yü-k'ò. My impression of the picture was that it hardly could be earlier than the Yüan period, though the very fine composition of mountain ridges, winding water, and high trees in the foreground may reproduce some great work by Wên T'ung.¹

Su Tung-p'ò formed, as a matter of fact, the centre of a whole group of painters of a similar type, i.e. highly cultivated men in official service who also were prominent as writers, calligraphists, and painters. Têng Ch'un, who places them into a separate class, called *Hsüan Mien Ts'ai Hsien* (High Officials and Virtuous Talents), mentions at least a dozen examples from the Northern Sung period beside such outstanding masters as the two Mi, Li Kung-lin and Su Shih. It is not necessary to relate here all what he has to say about them, particularly as their painted works, with one or two exceptions, no longer exist. Most of them seem to have specialized in painting bamboos, trees, and rocks like Liu Ching (tzŭ, Chü-chi), an intimate friend of Mi Fei, whose brush-work was "wild and free"; or Su Kuo, the youngest son of Su Shih, whose genius surpassed even his father's but whose career ended at the age of 30; or the highly refined scholar Sung Tzŭ-fang (tzŭ, Han-chieh), who also wrote an essay on the Six Principles of Painting; or Ch'êng T'ang (tzŭ, Kung-ming), who was the most successful follower of Wên T'ung and carried bamboo painting to the highest degree of specialization, or Fan Chêng-fu, Jên-i and others who continued the same traditions of bamboo- and landscape-painting.

One of the oldest men of this group, by whom an original work may still be seen in the ex-imperial collections in Peking, was Ch'ao Pu-chih, tzŭ, Wu-chiu, hao, Kuei-lai-tzŭ. He was born in 1052, served in the Yüan-yü era (1086-93) as secretary in the Board of Rites, was then appointed governor of Ho-chung (Shansi); and after a period of misfortune he became, through the protection of Chang T'ien-chüeh, governor of Ssü-chou (Anhui), but died one month after this appointment, in 1110.

This official career did not prevent him from carrying on an intense activity as a writer, calligraphist, and painter. His preparation for this must have been of the most comprehensive and eclectic kind; the number of old masters chosen by him as models seems almost bewildering, but the result was nevertheless a "floating and wonderful style" of his own. To quote from *Hua Chi*:—

"In painting Bodhisattvas he followed Hou-yü, for clouds he followed Wu Tao-tzŭ, for stones and pines Kuan T'ung, for buildings, grass, and trees Chou Fang and Kuo Chung-shu, for broken trees and creeping plants Li Ch'êng, for rocks and dry trees Hsü Tao-ning, for rushing water and mountain ranges Tung Yüan, for mounted men with bows Wei Hsien, for horses Han Kan, for tigers Pao Ting, for monkeys and deer I Yüan-chi, for cranes, pheasants, small birds, and mice Ts'ui Po. He collected the good points from all these masters and combined them into excellent and wonderful pictures."

To us it may seem still more wonderful that he, after such extensive study of all the

¹ Cf. *Chinese Paintings in Amer. Collect.*, pl. 112.

most famous specialists in every branch of painting, had enough left of his own to do some creative work.

This is, however, verified by a painting in the Palace Museum which carries his seal and signature (besides several imperial seals and an inscription by Ch'ien Lung). (Pl. 11.) It represents *Lao-tzŭ Riding on a Buffalo*; the conception of the traditional motive is slightly humorous or mocking, and the very free and spontaneous brush-work has the same tone of amusing virtuosity. It would be hard to divine that the painter who did this playful ink-sketch was such an assiduous student of classic models. What he learned from the old masters was evidently only the formulas of brush-work, and these he applied as freely as he used the written characters.

(5) *The Academy Painters of Landscape, Birds, and Flowers*

The rapid development of painting towards the end of the eleventh century, supported by an ever-increasing number of artists, has been already alluded to in our introductory chapter, where we dwelt in particular on the final official consummation of this activity: the Academy of Painting. A more detailed analysis of all the artistic efforts and personalities which contributed to this end would carry us beyond the limits of the present publication; it can no longer be done on the basis of what remains of the painters' works, but becomes largely a matter of historical research. Hundreds of biographies of prominent artists may be studied in such books as the *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u* and the *Hua Chi*, and there are other records which complete them. Many of the painters whose lives are thus recorded seem to have been men of considerable importance with high artistic standards. The original works which still exist indicate that the general level of painting was high and even. But it is very difficult to reach a critical sifting of the historical materials or a grouping of the artists according to schools or stylistic tendencies, because this is not the point of view of the old chroniclers. They mention the artists either according to their favourite subjects (as in the *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*), or according to their social rank (as in *Hua Chi*), and the characterization of their styles is generally less definite than the accounts of their lives. When no works by the respective painters are preserved, or when they are not classified as close followers of well-known masters, their position in the stylistic evolution becomes a matter of conjecture.

Our discussion must be limited mainly to the men by whom paintings still are to be found; they are comparatively few, but nevertheless sufficiently varied and characteristic to allow us to distinguish some diverging currents of style. Two of these have already been discussed: the heroic landscape painting of Kuo Hsi, which certainly had its supporters also after his death (c. 1190), and the more expressionistic movement represented by the landscapes of Mi Fei, and the bamboo paintings of Wên T'ung, Su Tung p'o and their surrounding. A third general current or group was formed by the painters who stood in closer contact with the Academy and court-circles; and as this group comprised a very large number of

artists, it must have shown many individual variations. But it represented more or less the official standards of taste. Many of the men who were active here were academicians and their works became accepted as models for study. Others were members of the imperial family, which also involved certain artistic standards and responsibilities. The principal motives of these men were landscapes, often with the addition of animals, birds, and flowering plants. Nature was for them, too, a source of inspiration, though in a more limited sense than for Kuo Hsi or Mi Fei; they kept, on the whole, closer to objective reality. The figure painters were less abundant; some of them will be mentioned in the chapter devoted to Li Lung-mien, the greatest religious painter of the period; others in connection with the re-establishment of the Academy in the Southern Sung capital, where they gathered after the fall of K'ai-fêng and continued their activities for many years.

One of the oldest and best known among these painters was Chao Ling-jiang, better known under his *tzŭ*, Ta-nien, who was active during the last quarter of the eleventh century and possibly earlier. He was related to the imperial family, and received a most careful education in letters and arts, so that his soul became nourished with the high ideals of the Classics and with Tu Fu's poetry: "his talents were beautiful and his manners excellent."¹ In his official career he rose to military sub-commander of Kuang-chou. He seems to have remained, in his life as well as in his art, a man with the limitations of perfect refinement. His pictures sometimes approach miniatures in size and technique, and he was able to write characters no larger than a pin-head, which could hardly be read with ordinary eyesight. Nevertheless he was a true artist: "his paintings of sandy beaches and islands with water-birds revealed the real ideas of the rivers and the lakes." Mi Fei had a great admiration for them, and a later critic, like Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, praises him as the most successful follower in the Sung period of Wang Wei. Some of his copies after the great T'ang master were, as a matter of fact, considered almost as good as the originals. His own compositions represented chiefly low river-banks with thatched cottages and weeping willows enveloped in a misty atmosphere and often enlivened by flocks of birds. The soft ink-tones are usually slightly heightened with colours.

A perfect example of his work is the often reproduced fan-picture in the Hara collection in Yokohama (cf. *Kokka*, 41), which represents a *River Scene in Autumn Mood*. The driving mist is enveloping the trees on the other side of the river, but in the foreground rises a solitary leafless willow, and white geese are playing on the water. In another small picture (belonging to Mr. Hayasaki in Tokyo) the season is further advanced: Snow covers the river-banks and black crows are circling in the grey moist air. Views of this sort may be called perfect of their kind; they carry definite suggestions of nature's moods at her respective seasons.

¹ The main historical informations about the painter are found in *Hua Chi* and in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. i, ll. 37-8, but some interesting remarks also in Mi Fei's *Hua Shih* and among the colophons by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang.

A more important composition of the artist is the scroll in the National Museum in Peking, which represents a long river scene in bright colours. (Pl. 12.) The background is filled with ridges of sharply-cut blue mountains; in the foreground are green hills with shady trees in pink and brown, small pavilions and cottages, and between them a placid water-course over which the mist is lifting. The composition is of a rather traditional type, but it may well have been rendered by Chao Ta-nien, as is claimed by the signatures and the inscriptions. The picture itself has, however, all the marks of a late copy; the execution is dry and the materials are of no great age.

The most harmonious products of Chao Ta-nien's art are, no doubt, the small monochrome ink paintings on round fans, two of which may be seen in the Boston Museum, while one is in a Japanese collection (formerly Akaboshi; cf. *Kokka*, no. 224). The motives of these, too, are sandy river-banks with trees that bend diagonally over the picture. In the Japanese picture we see a man on horseback accompanied by two servants approaching a thatched hut on the shore. It is said to illustrate Tao Yüan-ming's much-admired poem, "*Kuei ch'ü lai*" (Returning home), but as an illustration it is rather insignificant. The artistic beauty and suggestiveness of the picture depend by no means on the rendering of the literary motive, but on the way the open space is balanced in relation to the masses of leafage and the far extending flat shore-lines. The present title of the picture seems rather arbitrary and may have been caused by the tradition that Chao Ta-nien once made an illustration to Tao Yüan-ming's poem. But this was, according to Mi Fei, a horizontal scroll. "When I was in the capital," writes Mi Fei, "I obtained a scroll of his, entitled '*Kuei ch'ü lai*'. The bamboo fence, the rush hut, the mist-enveloped grove, distant hills and streams—a thousand *li* in a foot of space—sedge and bulrush, egret and gull—a perfect river scene painted with loving skill." The description would fit several of Chao Ta-nien's pictures; the compositional elements mentioned here return over and over again in his works which, however small they may be, convey an impression of space which is the secret and soul of his art.

Very prominent in this respect are the two fan-pictures in the Boston Museum. One is a winter or autumn-view with bare trees by the water-side, which spread their network of fine dark branches against the lighter background of the silk. The contour of a hill is slightly indicated at one side, and in the foreground are some big stones. But large portions of the picture are simply left bare, forming stretches of sky and water, and it is by this means, in contrast to the network of the trees, that the impression of great space is produced. In the other picture, which is executed with stronger and more decisive strokes, the composition is still more concentrated. It consists of two old willows with long waving branches and between them some low houses, partly built out over the water. (Pl. 13.) The slight indication of a shore-line at the opposite side of the picture is of little importance; it disappears gradually into the background where the misty air envelopes all the

forms. It is simply space, indefinite but eloquent, as it carries a suggestion of something into which the forms are steeped.

Chao Ta-nien's somewhat archaistic type of work, based on Wang Wei and Li Ssü-hsün, (who to him were far from incompatible opposites) was certainly not an isolated thing. There were other painters with similar ideals, and several of them seem to have belonged to the same high social class, being either princes or more distant relatives of the reigning house. The imperial house of Sung had evidently a strong artistic vein. Têng Ch'un mentions a dozen painters who were counted among the members of the imperial house from about 1074 to 1167, though few of them were actually princes. Among the latter may be remembered Tsung-han, *tzü*, Hsien-fu, the youngest son of Prince An-i, a most refined and talented painter, who excelled in pictures of reeds and geese. Mi Fei wrote a poem on a picture of his, in which he praises its poetic charm. Li Wei,¹ *tzü*, Kung-chao, was also son of a prince and furthermore married to Emperor Jên Tsung's daughter. He amused himself almost in secret with calligraphy and painting, destroying most of his works, so that nobody beside the emperor would see them. One of them has, however, survived—a large ink-painting in the "*fei pai*"² manner representing *A Bamboo Garden with Pavilions and Figures*. It is now in the Boston Museum. (Pl. 14.) The composition is charmingly idyllic, and the whole thing has the air of refinement that may be expected from a man who was a skilful dilettante rather than an inspired and highly trained artist. It gives us an impression of the high standard of brushmanship that prevailed in this golden age of Chinese painting.

Shih-tung, *tzü*, Ming-fa, was a still more prominent artist; he came out first in a competition which was held in the Yüan-fu era (1098–1100) among members of the imperial family and obtained the *chin shih* degree. He was considered by some critics as of equal importance with Chao Ta-nien, but there is no work of his from which we could learn how closely resembling the two masters may have been.

Other painters of the same class were: Shih-yen, Duke of Hsiang, who painted small landscapes in colour; Shih-tsun, an uncle of Emperor Hui Tsung, also a landscape painter, and furthermore men like Wang-hsien, *tzü*, Chin-ch'ing (married to the Emperor Ying Tsung's daughter), and Chao Po-chü, two artists of great merit, who revived the green-and-gold fashion of Li Ssü-hsün, painting "the wrinkles of the mountains with gold and green jasper". Some of Chao Po-chü's works of this gaily coloured type are still to be seen, but a closer description of them may be reserved for the next chapter, as the main part of the painter's activity fell within the South Sung period.

The painters of less prominent social standing, classified by Têng Ch'un as *Chin Shên Wei Pu* (Ordinary Officials and Commoners) were, indeed, still more

¹ Li Wei's biography and all his high military titles are found in the *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*. Two of his pictures were in the Imperial collection, and one of them is supposed to be identical with the one now in Boston.

² *Fei pai* is the use of insufficient ink so as to show white spots in the brush-strokes. Cf. Giles, *Dictionary*.

numerous—no fewer than forty-five names are recorded—and among them may have been several landscape painters with similar conservative ideals as those of the artists mentioned above, yet; not a few of them specialized in painting bamboos and trees like Su Tung-p'ao and his friends. But as no examples of their works have become known, it seems superfluous to enumerate their names and special features.

Another group of specialized painters connected with the Academy and much appreciated by the fashionable collectors of the time, were those who devoted themselves almost exclusively to flower- and bird-painting. The vogue for such paintings increased rapidly towards the end of the eleventh century. The Emperor Hui Tsung was himself one of them, and his collection contained a larger number of flower- and bird-pictures than of any other kind of paintings.

The oldest and most famous among them was Ts'ui Po, *tzü*, Tzū-hsi, from Hao-liang in Anhui,¹ who is said to have done some Buddhist and Taoist figures, but specialized in painting flowers, bamboo, "feathers and fur" from life, and excelled particularly in pictures of geese. At the beginning of the Hsi-ning era (1068–1077) he took part in an imperial competition in painting a silken screen with bamboo and bird-motives and came out first. He was then appointed professor in the Academy, a charge which he first refused, owing to his love of freedom and ease, but finally accepted. His influence in the Academy became very great, and his works were officially approved as standard models instead of the flower- and bird-paintings by Huang Ch'üan and Huang Chü-ts'ai, which up to that time had been the classic examples. He surpassed the earlier masters by the ease and freedom of his brush-work; he painted from nature and worked with masterly speed and sureness.

Two examples of Ts'ui Po's art may still be seen in the Palace Museum in Peking²; one representing a white goose, standing with lifted head among some reeds at a flat shore; the other a pair of magpies in a dry tree and below, on the snowy ground, a hare which looks up with some astonishment to the chattering birds. The pictures are typical of their kind; and it may be said, in using the traditional Chinese vocabulary, that the painter has insisted more on the form than on the spirit of the motives. The compositions are well balanced, and the large goose stands out with its full plastic volume against the background of sky and water, but there are no accents of individual expression or flashes of poetic inspiration.

Ts'ui Po's new departure in flower- and bird-painting was further developed by his friend and pupil Wu Yüan-yü, *tzü*, Kung-ch'i, a man from K'ai-fêng who, to begin with, was in the service of Prince Wu and who gradually made an important military career, rising to the post of commanding general at Kuang-chou (Honan) and honoured at his death with high titles. He is said also to have contributed very

¹ The completest biography of Ts'ui Po is given in *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*.

² Reproduced in *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. 7, pl. 1, and vol. 14, pl. 1. A fragment of a picture attributed to Ts'ui Po is reproduced in *Ars Asiatica*, i, pl. 17; another goose-picture possibly by him in the catalogue of the Tokyo Exhibition, pl. 49.

effectively to the change of the traditional academy style, "expressing his mind and heart in wonderful pictures" of flowers and birds. But besides such things he also painted portraits. He became, as a matter of fact, so famous as a bird-painter that towards the end of his life, when his creative faculties abated, he was induced to satisfy the ever-increasing demand with works by his pupils on which he put his own seal. No fewer than 187 pictures by Wu Yüan-yü are included in *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*.

Stylistically Wu Yüan-yü's art represented the same ideals as Ts'ui Po's, but to judge by the examples of these masters still existing, it seems that the younger painter was the more sensitive and represented his birds with a touch of intimacy that is less evident in those of Ts'ui Po. The two pictures here reproduced may serve as illustrations of the whole school; they belong to Miss Alice O'Brien in St. Paul, Minn., and are provided with old labels containing the name of the painter and the year *kui wei*, 10th month, 1st day, which in this case probably corresponds to the year 1103. More than ten years have passed since I saw the pictures in Peking, but if my recollection is correct, they may be originals of the period. (Pls. 15-16.) The compositions complete each other: the gander is standing on the shore with three newly hatched goslings in front of him looking with some anxiety (with open beak) towards the goose which, in the other picture, is represented floating on the water with two small goslings under her wings, while a third one is hesitating on the shore. Some tufts of rushes and flowering plants are growing at the edge of the bank in the foreground and serve to accentuate the dividing line between water and land, but they do not interfere with the large white silhouettes of the birds, which dominate the compositions. They stand out beautifully against the darker tone of the silk, which represents water and sky without any further indications or dividing lines. It is simply by the placing of the birds and the perfect rendering of their full bodies in white feathery garments that the artist creates an impression of depth. The goose, which is placed almost in the centre of the picture, is actually floating on the water; she is carried by something which may be felt rather than seen. Beyond the bird is an indefinite space, out of which the white shape emerges with full plasticity. But within this framework of bold contrasts the artist has concentrated an intimate care and technical skill on the main motives. He has given a perfect characterization of the different temperaments of the male and the female bird; the former upright, proudly strutting on the shore, the latter placidly floating on the water and fondling her young with the most graceful movement of the long neck. Here is a note of tenderness and love expressed in a form which has an almost tactile beauty, the indescribable charm and purity which we associate with the white Sung glazes, tempered by age.

The intrinsic beauty of pictures like this is the best testimony of their origin. Later bird-painters, who have tried similar motives, as, for instance, Lü Chi in his brilliant renderings of white geese, have never reached the same degree of intimate and harmonious beauty.

Ts'ui P'o and Wu Yüan-yü were, no doubt, the most important of the flower- and bird-painters during the Northern Sung period, but it may be recalled, that there were also others who reached considerable fame, as for instance, I Yüan-chi, a native of Ch'ang-sha in Hunan, who was employed in decorating an imperial palace in 1066. He is said to have begun as a painter of flowers and birds, but as he realized that other painters, such as Chao Ch'ang, had done this to perfection, "he struck out in an original line not already occupied by the men of old,"¹ and became the foremost painter of gibbons. His best known picture was *The Hundred Gibbons*, which survives in an interesting copy in the National Museum in Peking.

Several of these painters (and also later ones) excelled in representing "a hundred" (i.e. a great number of) birds, or "a hundred" animals of some kind in one picture. It was considered a test of artistic skill and accomplishment to be able to do this without causing an effect of confusion or monotony. Thus Ma Fên (or Pên), who was active at the end of the eleventh century and became a *tai chao* in Hui Tsung's Academy, painted *The Hundred Apes*, *The Hundred Horses*, *The Hundred Bulls*, *The Hundred Sheep*, *The Hundred Deer*, *The Hundred Wild Geese*. We are told that though all these compositions contained great crowds, they were not confused, an opinion which is fully supported by the charming scroll in the Honolulu Academy of Arts representing *The Hundred Wild Geese*. It is painted on paper with light-ink in a very fluent style and has the quality of an original of the Sung period. It bears an imperial seal and label besides the painter's signature. (Pls. 17-18.)

To render justice to this subtle paraphrase on the airy and volatile motive in words is hardly possible. It is like a virtuoso performance in tones of ink instead of music, by which the fleeting movements of the birds are expressed as swiftly and lightly as in nature. The long river- or marsh-landscape, which forms the background, is only slightly indicated by tufts of bending reeds and silhouettes of stones disappearing in the mist. And through all this the birds form a continuous *Leitmotiv*, sometimes in groups, sometimes in a thin string, soaring through the air, diving in the water, flocking on the shore, playing, fighting and brooding—an infinite variety of positions and combinations, accentuated by the touch of the life-imparting brush of the painter.

Ma Fên, the first of the numerous painters of the Ma family, was evidently not one of the great men of the epoch (Mi Fei mentions him in a rather disparaging way), but he knew how to handle the brush and the ink, and if the above-mentioned picture, as we believe, is an original of his, it may serve to illustrate the high standard of ink painting even among minor men of this epoch.

Another painter who enjoyed more imperial favours, though his talent was hardly of a superior order, was Ai Hsüan. He came from Nanking and was accepted in the Academy through the personal intervention of the Emperor Shên Tsung, in spite of the fact that he did not succeed in the competition in which Ts'ui

¹ Cf. Giles, op. cit., p. 112.

Po came out first. His paintings of flowers, bamboos and birds were done in a light and vaporous colouring which gave them an atmosphere of life; they were beautifully finished, but so thinly painted that one could not feel the colour, if one touched them with the finger—just like Chao Ch'ang's paintings which were his particular models. He specialized in painting withered grass and wild hazel-nuts of a melancholy appearance, but became still more known for his pictures of quails, a motive which seems to have attracted several of the Academy painters including Hui Tsung himself. The picture in the National Museum in Peking, which carries his signature, may not be an original, but even so, it may be chosen as a characteristic illustration of his quiet and lonesome art. It represents *An Egg-plant and a Tuft of Cabbage* executed in colour on silk. (Pl. 19.) The picture has the same qualities of minute faithfulness and refinement that we observed in the flower-paintings by Chao Ch'ang, though with a lack of freshness which may be due to a copying hand.

Liu Ch'ang, who also came from Nanking, was another flower-painter of the same group. A picture of his representing a branch of peach blossoms came into the possession of Mi Fei, who considered the master fully equal to Chao Ch'ang.

Yüeh Shih-hsüan, *tzŭ*, Tê-ch'ên, from Hsiang-fu (K'ai-fêng), was evidently a master of still greater importance, distinguished as a high military official and as a painter of flowers and birds. His biography is related at length in *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*, and forty-one of his pictures are listed there, but as none of them has been identified, we have no occasion to dwell on the prowess of Yüeh Shih-hsüan's character or on the unusual qualities of his art. It may simply be noted that, as a consequence of the former, he rose to the rank of a Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent, while he as a painter left his teacher and competitor, Ai Hsüan, far behind. We are assured that "his art was really unsurpassed in the northern provinces". His earlier works were executed in colour, like Ai Hsüan's, but the latter were of a freer kind, painted with floating ink. Most of them represented flowering herbs or trees with birds in combination with water. It is to be regretted that no work by this much appreciated painter has become known, but it may not be out of place to recall here a picture in the Freer Gallery which, at least by its motive, stands close to Yüeh Shih-hsüan's art. It represents *A Pair of Mandarin Ducks under a Flowering Shrub* and was once ascribed to Hsü Hsi, though it seems to have no connection with the art of the master. (Pl. 20.) It may be a work of the Northern Sung period; the execution in light colours is sensitive, and it has an atmosphere of life which is seldom found in later things of this type. It may consequently serve as an example of bird-painting in the Northern Sung period.

The younger generation of flower- and bird-painters, active during the first quarter of the twelfth century, was dominated by the imperial master and expert in this kind of art, Hui Tsung. His æsthetic ideas were characterized in a previous chapter, and we mentioned also some of his still existing works which chronologically would fit in here. (Pls. 21 and 22.) They represent a new stage in the development of flower- and bird-painting; their absolute fidelity to nature is

combined with a refinement of design and colouring that sometimes almost becomes prettiness. It is an art which sought perfection within rather narrow limits and consequently became a classic model for later generations. Among the painters who worked along the same lines as the Emperor Hui Tsung should be remembered Li An-chung and Li Ti; both mainly active after the fall of the Northern Sung dynasty and prominent members of Kao Tsung's Academy in Hang-chou. Li An-chung, who was the older, is, however, usually counted among the painters of the Northern Sung period. He painted landscapes as well as birds, and became particularly famous for his pictures of quails. At least three specimens of his art have been preserved in Japanese collections (cf. *Kokka*, 36, 54, 296), and one of them—the *Quail among Grasses and Flowering Herbs* in Mr. Nezu's collection—is often reproduced. It may not be quite equal to the emperor's painting of the same motive, but as a technical performance and exact study of this favourite bird motive it stands on a high level.

(6) *Li Lung-mien and the Buddhist Painters*

The only figure painter of the Northern Sung period comparable as an artistic genius to the landscape painters of Kuo Hsi's and Mi Fei's class is Li Kung-lin, better known by his *tzŭ*, Li Po-shih, and his *hao*, Li Lung-mien, a name which he received from Lung-mien shan (the Sleeping Dragon Mountain), the place where he passed the later years of his life. He was born about 1040 at Shu-ch'êng in Anhui and died 1106, probably at Lung-mien shan, only one year before Mi Fei. The main currents and events of his life are retraced in the biography quoted below. It appears from other sources that he passed through several degrees of the official career without ever doing much service in any department, and became gradually known not only as a painter of the highest standard, but also as one of the most cultured and noblest characters of the age.

Li Lung-mien was hardly what would be called a religious personality, nor was he a poet or a nature-worshipper, like some of the great landscape painters; his genius was coupled with a clear intellect, much learning, and an unusual balance of character. Among the 107 pictures of his which are listed in *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*, the greatest number represent Buddhist motives, many of them in quite unconventional form, but there are also Taoist and Confucian (classical) pictures, historical portraits and genre-scenes, a dozen horse paintings, birds, butterflies, flowers, and landscapes with figures. Li Lung-mien was not so highly specialized as most of the contemporary painters; his artistic activity and his cultural interests spread over many fields, though his greatest influence was evidently in the domain of religious art. The most complete chronicle of his life is included in *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u*, from which the following may be quoted:—

“His father Hsü-i received the title of a Wise, Good and Upright man and served as a counsellor in the Ta-li ssŭ (The High Court). He was fond of collecting standard calligraphies and famous paintings. Kung-lin had thus an opportunity of studying

these from an early age and to become familiar with the style and brush-work of the old masters. His writing in 'model style' and 'running hand' showed the influence he had received from the styles of the Chin and the Sung dynasties (265-479). As a painter he stands unsurpassed, and his works are highly valued in the whole world.

"He was a man of great learning and penetrating intellect, who by the power of his thought, and his quick observation, realized the essential in everything. At first, when he started to paint, he studied Ku K'ai-chih, Lu T'an-wei, Chang Sêng-yu, and Wu Tao-yüan, besides the works of other famous masters of the past. In this way he stored up in his memory a great wealth, utilizing all the good points of his predecessors to form a style of his own. He did not, however, work as if he were plagiarizing the earlier masters, but tried to grasp the essential secrets of their art. Whenever he came across a famous painting, ancient or modern, he made a copy of it, and thus his house became filled with famous pictures of every kind.

"He was particularly skilful in painting figures and he knew how to characterize their form and countenance so that anyone who looked at them could understand if they were courtiers, scholars, hermits, uneducated common people, servants, or slaves. Their manners, gestures, and expressions, their use of the limbs, inclinations forward and backward, their size and appearance, etc., every feature was brought out distinctly.

"Kung-lin started generally by establishing the idea of the picture; then followed composition and decorative arrangement. Common artists may be able to imitate his beautifully coloured and highly finished paintings, but they cannot reach his more simplified free and sketchy manner. He learned a great deal from Tu Fu's art of writing poetry and applied this to painting. For instance, when Tu Fu wrote the poem 'Tying up the Hens', he did not dwell on the gain or loss of the hens or the insects, but fixed his attention on the moment when he was standing in the mountain pavilion, contemplating the cold river. In Kung-lin's illustration of T'ao Ch'ien's '*Kuei ch'ü lai*' (Returning home) he did not insist on the fields, the gardens, the pine-trees and the chrysanthemums, but rather on the enjoyment of the clear flowing water. When Tu Fu wrote about the destruction of his grass hut by the autumn storms, he did not lament over the torn bed-cover or the leaking hut, but expressed his wish to extend a big shelter over all the poor scholars of the world so as to make their faces grow happy. Likewise Kung-lin, in making a picture of the Yang-kuan Pass, thought that partings and outbursts of sorrow were too commonplace emotions; instead of such scenes he represented an angler quietly seated at the side of a stream showing no concern over the sorrow and the joy (around him). All his other works were done in a similar fashion; it was left to the people who looked at them to discover (their meaning).

"Therefore in regard to ideas he was like Wu Tao-yüan, but by his cheerfulness he was like Wang Wei. The figures in his picture of the Hua-yen council (a Buddhist assembly) may be compared to (Wu's) Scenes of Hell, whereas his painting of the Lung-mien Hill Farm is comparable to (Wang Wei's) Wang-ch'uan scroll. He appropriated all the good points of his predecessors, united them in his works and rose high above the common level. His paintings have been dispersed all over the world, so that everybody can find an opportunity to examine them.

"To begin with, Kung-lin was fond of painting horses mainly in the manner of Han Kan, which he, however, modified, but one day a Taoist advised him not to do so, because (he said) there is a danger that you may fall into the ways of a horse. Kung-lin grasped the meaning and changed to the painting of Taoist and Buddhist subjects, which he did with still greater skill.

"Once he painted some horses of the imperial stable which had been given in tribute by the Khotanese of the Western Land, for instance the Good Headed horse and the Red Brocade Shouldered horse, beside others. He did a number of them, but the stable officials asked him for the pictures, because they feared that the spirits of the

horses would go with the images. He became thus, to begin with, famous as a painter of horses.

"When he was serving as an official and lived in the capital for ten years, he never entered the house of a man of great influence or of high rank. Whenever he could leave his duties and the weather was good, he would provide himself with some wine and go out of the city accompanied by some friends. They would visit famous gardens or shady forests and sit down on stones at the side of water, feeling happy and joyous for the whole day. During this period it also happened quite often that men of wealth and high position who wanted to obtain some of his works, showed him courtesies and the like, but Kung-lin was stubborn and did not return their advances. But scholars of worth, even though they were complete strangers, he would befriend and accompany, and for their sake he was willing to move his brush without the least difficulty. He also painted ancient jade objects, such as the *kuei* and the *p'i*, and studied thoroughly their names and meaning, so that (his pictures) would show no mistakes.

"He served as an official for thirty years but never, even for a day, did he forget the mountains and forests. Therefore his mind became filled with pictures. Later in life he became afflicted with rheumatism, but between the groans he would still lift his hand and draw with the finger on the bed-cover as if he were applying a brush. His family warned him not to do it, but he smiled and answered: 'It is an old habit of mine. I cannot help it; it comes to me unconsciously.' Such was his love of painting.

"When his illness was abating the people who asked for pictures came again; Kung-lin sighed and said to them: 'When I paint, I do it as the poet composes his poems; I chant of nature and of my heart's desire—nothing more. Why cannot the people who seek my pictures for their entertainment understand this?' Afterwards, whenever he made a picture to give away, he would always embody in it an advice or a warning, following the idea of the fortune-teller Chün-p'ing, who told the people their good or bad fortunes in order to make them act properly.

"After his death it became even more difficult to obtain pictures of his; they were often paid very highly in silk and gold. Consequently there appeared forgers who made imitations of his pictures in order to reap profit from such frauds. Those who had little knowledge of pictures were sometimes taken in, but those with a deeper knowledge could not avoid discovering them.

"In his official career he rose to Ch'ao-feng-lang; then he retired and died at home. Still scholars and officials to-day do not call him by his name but by the *tzü* he chose for himself: Lung-mien Chü-shih (The Retired Scholar of Lung-mien).

"Wang An-shih was careful in choosing his friends, yet he went to visit Kung-lin at Chung Shan, and when he left (Kung-lin?) wrote four lines of poetry as a farewell which were much admired.¹

"After examining the whole life and activity of Kung-lin we find that his literary style had the characteristics of the Chien-an period (265-479), and that he followed Ku K'ai-chih and Lu T'an-wei in painting. As a connoisseur of bells, tripods, and other antiquities his knowledge was deep and extensive, in fact, there was nobody who could equal him. It happened at the time that Tuan-i obtained a jade-seal which he presented to the emperor, but nobody could explain it until Kung-lin came and offered the explanation, which caused great admiration among the scholars. But as he was lost in the crowd of minor officials, he could not come to the front (as a connoisseur). Consequently his name became famous only in painting, but now we have recorded in detail his life quite clearly."

Students of modern times may not be able to agree with the last sentence of the biography; the historical events in the life of Li Kung-lin could have been more

¹ Among Li Kung-lin's pictures in the Hsüan-ho collection was also one representing Wang An-shih strolling in the woods.

fully recorded. Yet, we may gather from this record, which probably was written only fourteen or fifteen years after his death, some idea about Li Kung-lin's artistic evolution through a continuous study of the great masters of antiquity and also about his great learning, his extraordinary power of characterization, his inexhaustible richness of ideas, the variety of his subjects, and his way of working which he himself characterized in the words: "I do it as the poet composes his poems, expressing my heart's desire and my love of nature."

Li Kung-lin belonged to the same constellation of great poets, artists, and philosophers as Su Tung-p'o, Huang T'ing-chien, Mi Fei, and others of this golden era, but he was evidently less inclined to excesses and sarcasms than some of the others. When these people met, they often amused themselves by making pictures and poems in collaboration; Li added figures to the landscapes of Su, and Su wrote poems on Li's pictures. Their philosophical and religious tenets were of the broadest kind, containing Buddhist and Taoist as well as Confucian elements, more or less like the eclectic philosophy of Chu Hsi which was formulated during the next generation. It was less a question of doctrines than of individual interpretations in symbols of art and poetry. They were great minds who looked for the soul of things and the spiritual significance beyond the words and doctrines.

If we turn to the paintings associated with the name of Li Kung-lin, we are surprised by their number as well as by their variety in style and motives. Hundreds of such pictures could be mentioned, small album-leaves executed in delicate lines, scrolls with legendary motives, likewise in monochrome, and larger paintings in colour on silk. It is evident that the majority of these pictures has a fairly remote connection with the master, but a certain number are early copies, and a few may be originals, or at least pictures of the period. It may be recalled, for instance, that the catalogue of the paintings in the National Museum in Peking enumerates five scrolls and one hanging picture by the master, of which no more than one seems to be of the Sung period, and that only two of the hundred odd pictures which were listed in Charles L. Freer's personal catalogue as works by Li Kung-lin nowadays are accepted in his museum as originals.¹

The best documented among the pictures attributed to Li Kung-lin is, to our knowledge, the so-called *Wu Ma t'u*, a scroll representing five beautiful horses with their grooms, sent in tribute to the Chinese emperor from Khotan and other Western countries.² (Pls. 23-27.) According to inscriptions on the picture, the horses

¹ A somewhat more liberal opinion about the works by Li Lung-mien in the Freer collection is expressed by Agnes E. Meyer in her book: *Chinese Painting as reflected in the Thought and Art of Li Lung-mien*, New York, 1932, pp. 219-23. She considers the following pictures as the most authentic works by the master: *The White Lotus Club* (also known as *Landscape with Fairies*); *The Shu River scroll*; *The Album of Lohans*; *The Cassia Hall and Epidendrum Palace* (a scroll of garden pavilions and terraces), all belonging to the Freer Gallery, and furthermore a picture representing *Lao-tzu delivering the Tao Tê-ching* in her own collection.

² The picture was until recently in the Imperial Manchu Household collection in Peking, and has been reproduced in a series of large photographs both in Peking and in Tokyo. It is now said to be in a private collection in Japan.

were painted 1086–1087, i.e. at a time when Li was nearly fifty years old, which proves that it was not only in early years that Li indulged in horse painting.

The motive is practically the same as in some of Han Kan's famous pictures, but treated in a different spirit with less insistence on the ornamental beauty of the animals and their attire than on their broad plastic forms. The five horses are all unsaddled, standing quietly or walking leisurely, led by native grooms. The aim of the artist seems to have been to give a series of horse portraits; each horse is convincingly characterized by the shape and expression of its head as well as by its general bearing and structure. In some cases there is a curious resemblance between the men and their animals; it seems as if they had lived long enough together to take on an air of intimate friendship or similarity.

The keen observations of the artist are rendered with great economy of means. He has used mainly outlines, but in some cases also washes of ink by which the tone or the colouring of the animal is suggested. But each stroke of the brush has a significance; every slight shading serves a purpose, and this is perhaps even more evident in the drawings of the men than in the horses. The large forms of the horses appear (at least in the photographs) somewhat empty in comparison with the more articulated shapes of the highly individualized grooms. The picture may have lost something through the wear of ages; it is no longer in a pristine condition, but still a thing of strength and beauty, which conveys an impression of the artist's feeling for the significance of form and his faculty of utilizing line as a means of plastic definition. It is evidently not a work which reveals Li Kung-lin's full power as a horse painter, yet, it justifies Su Tung-p'o's opinion expressed in the words: "In Lung-mien's mind are a thousand horses; he paints not only their flesh but their very bones." More surprising are the words of Huang T'ing-chien in regard to the same subject: "Po-shih made horses like the rocks in the waterfalls of Sun T'ai-ku"; possibly a reference to the strong shapes and structure of the animals.¹ Têng Ch'un, who reports these sayings, then tells about Li Kung-lin's friendship with a Buddhist monk who warned him against specializing in horse painting, because "one day you may transmigrate as a horse". Li realized the importance of the warning and concentrated henceforth on Buddhist paintings.

More realistic as a whole, though dominated by a definite linear rhythm, is the short scroll in the National Museum in Peking, which is known as "*Chi jang t'u*" (Beating the Ground). (Pls. 25–26.) It represents a series of popular types: Loafers, beggars, children, musicians and dancers in small groups, which are scattered over the paper, almost as if they were jotted down casually; yet, forming a continuous composition from one end to the other. There is no indication of a horizontal plane or of definite scenery, but we receive nevertheless an impression of depth and distance. The figures are moving in every possible direction, they turn round, they jump and whirl, beating the ground with their feet to the rhythmic sound of the drums and pipes, while the onlookers, old and young, are taking part in the

¹ Cf. Li Kung-lin's biography in *Hua Chi*.

enjoyment with gestures and shouts. Nothing could be more spontaneous, more fresh and vivid, and at the same time better co-ordinated into a succession of well-balanced groups, than this long composition of dancing and frolicking people.

They are executed in the so-called *pai miao* style with a light and pointed brush, but the strokes in the grinning faces and fluttering garments are replete with life. They are broadening and narrowing in accordance with the movements, as if they were reflecting the impetus of the artist's creative feeling. The paper has a soft greyish hue out of which the figures emerge with somewhat darker tones. There is no seal or signature on this scroll, but if the vital quality and expressiveness may be taken as criteria of Li Kung-lin's work, it may possibly be an original.

The other pictures in the same collection ascribed to Li Kung-lin are altogether on a different level, more or less lacking in the element of spontaneity, which we expect in originals, though executed in the style of the master. One is a hanging picture representing the *Eighteen Lohans*; one consists of a series of seven album leaves representing the *Seven Buddhas*; the others are horizontal scrolls, known as *Shan Chuang t'u* (The Hill Farm), *Fan Wang Li Fo t'u* (A Foreign King venerating Buddha), and *Ying Chên t'u*, representing Eighteen Holy Men who are crossing the sea to venerate the Bodhisattva Kuanyin. They are all executed in the *pai miao* technique on paper, except two which are on fine silk, and they are all provided with seals and inscriptions of various periods, by which they are classified as Li Kung-lin's works.

A full description of every picture would require too much space, and since we already have reached some idea about Li's style as a figure painter, it may suffice to dwell for a moment on the landscape scroll. It is a highly imaginative composition, quite different from those of contemporary Sung painters and in some respects more akin to earlier landscapes of T'ang or previous times. The ideal predecessor of Li's Hill Farm picture was, no doubt, Wang Wei's *Wang-ch'uan* scroll, though the connection is of a more ideal than formal kind. The old critics had evidently their good reasons for saying that Li followed in the footsteps of the great painters of the T'ang period without copying them slavishly.

The basic note of the picture is one of grandeur and peace, not to say monotony, as the $3\frac{1}{2}$ metres long scroll is filled from top to bottom and from one end to the other with sections of precipitous mountains, split and hollowed into crevices and caves, divided by rushing streams, screened at other places by high trees of many kinds. (Pl. 27.) The design is so dense, the details so crowded, that the eye hardly can penetrate into the space beyond, and the decorative impression becomes as a whole like that of a frieze or strip of grey tapestry. It is only after attentive study that one begins to realize the richness and significance of the whole composition, the inexhaustiveness of the creative imagination which here has been at work. But the brush-work has not the strength and freedom of an original work by a great master.

A still more fantastic and varied landscape composition is the long scroll

(9½ metres) in the Freer Gallery, which is described officially as *Deities and Fairies in an Imaginary Landscape*, and called by Mrs. Meyer *The White Lotus Club*, a title which refers to a society of priests and literary men who in the fourth century retired to the solitude of the Lu Mountain under the leadership of Hui-yüan, the founder of the Ch'ing-t'u sect. (Pl. 28.) They lived here in closest communion with nature and became known as the Eighteen Wise Men of the Lu Mountain or the White Lotus Club. The traditions of this monastic foundation, in which Buddhist and Taoist ideas were freely combined, may have inspired Li to his composition, which, however, is a vision rather than an illustration. The continuous landscape consists of the most fantastic rocks, split and moulded into cloud-like shapes, gnarled pines, open stretches of water, garden terraces, and lotus ponds, and it is rendered still more visionary by the lofty towers and temple pavilions which now and again rise through the clouds. The holy men, who gather around the buildings, or sit in silent worship on the terraces, seem to be filled with a spirit of deepest veneration for the mystic presences indicated not only through the dream-like character of the scenery but also by such features as men descending on clouds.

The other scroll in the Freer Gallery, which nowadays is accepted as a possible Li Kung-lin, represents *Views of an Imperial Summer Palace*, i.e. series of open pavilions and galleries around courts and lakes. (Pl. 29.) It is pre-eminently a "boundary painting" executed with the help of ruler and foot-measure. The buildings are represented from above, so that we can see a succession of pavilions and courts, the one behind the other as in architectural prospects. But the whole thing is enveloped in an atmosphere of light haze, and the buildings are so light and airy that they almost lose their character of earthly structures. They are more like dream palaces seen through the veil of a silvery mist. The pale grey tone of the paper and the ink is not heightened by any contrast. The picture is really too delicate for reproduction, and its suggestiveness is too subtle to be conveyed by any description. It is difficult to believe that anybody but Li Kung-lin himself could have done such a masterpiece of pure and sensitive draughtsmanship.

If we may believe Mi Fei, Li Kung-lin worked sometimes in closer adherence to the great masters of the T'ang period. As an example of this is particularly mentioned a famous picture of his known as *A Poetical Gathering in the Western Garden*, which represented a number of the most famous philosophers, poets, writers, and painters gathered in the palatial garden of Wang Chin-ch'ing's summer residence. Mi Fei gives a graphic description of the composition, which furthermore was reproduced by later artists such as Chao Mêng-fu and Ch'iu Ying. To quote ¹:—

"Li Po-shih made, after the style of General Li the younger (Li Chao-tao), a landscape in colours representing water, rocks, clouds, grass, trees, flowers, and bamboo, which was wonderfully done and really impressive. The figures were charmingly rendered and all with striking likeness; they appeared carefree and natural, quite

¹ Cf. *Hua Hsüeh Hsin Yin*, vol. ii.

unrestrained by the troubles of this common world. It was indeed a most unusual painting.

"The man with a black cap and a yellow Taoist robe, holding a brush in the act of writing, was master Tung-p'ò; the one with a peach-coloured turban and a purple garment, who sat looking on, was Wang Chin-ch'ing; the man in dark blue clothes, who stood upright holding a square instrument, was Ts'ai T'ien-ch'i from Tan-yang; and the man who grasped the back of his chair and stood observing, was Li Tuan-shu. Behind him stood a female servant whose hair was done up with jade trinkets, and who was dressed in a rich and noble fashion; she was one of Wang Chin-ch'ing's singing girls. Under a large shady pine, on which some creeping plants with purplish flowers were entangled, stood a stone table with some antique objects and a lute of jade. Close by, seated on a stone under a plantain with a Taoist cap on his head, wearing a purple garment, supporting himself with the right hand and holding in the left a scroll, in which he was reading, was Su Tzū-yu. The man in a garment of coarse silk and a turban on his head, who held a palm-leaf fan in his hand and looked on very attentively, was Huang Lu-chih; and the man with a strangely shaped cap of coarse cloth on his head, who held before him a scroll on which he was illustrating (painting) Tao Yuan-ming's "*Kuei ch'ü lai*", was Li Po-shih. Standing at his side, holding the hand on his shoulder, was Ch'ao Wu-chiu with a loose cap on his head and blue robe; while Chang Wen-ch'ien knelt at his side with a stone in his hand, looking at the picture, and Chêng Ching-lao, in a Taoist cap and a white robe, stood with his hands on his knees looking on. Behind him stood a boy holding a staff of immortality in his hand. Two men were seated on the coiling roots of an old juniper tree; the one with the cap on his head and the hands in the sleeves of his blue garment was Ch'in Shao-yu; he was listening attentively to Ch'en Pi-hsü, who, wearing a high hat in the shape of a lute-tail and purple-coloured Taoist garments, was playing on the lute. But Mi Yüan-chang, wearing a cap and a dark garment of T'ang fashion, was standing with raised head writing on a stone tablet. At his side, looking on with raised head and the hands in the sleeves, was Wang Chung-chih. In front of him stood a boy with short hair, holding an ink-stone, and behind them could be seen an ornamented stone bridge. Bamboos growing along the clear stream formed a cool and shady place of luxuriant verdure. Here a Buddhist priest was seated on his straw cushion discussing the Wu Shêng Lun (non-existence). This was the great scholar Yüan T'ung. At his side was a man in a robe of coarse cloth, listening attentively; that was Liu Chü-chi. The two men sat on strangely shaped stones and below their feet was a rushing torrent which flowed into a bigger stream. The water was murmuring among the stones and the sound of wind could be heard in the bamboos. A light smoke was curling in the air, and the plants and the trees exhaled sweet fragrance. The peaceful solitude of this scene could not be surpassed. Alas, those who covet fame and wealth do not know how to withdraw from the world. How could they ever reach this state of contentment?

"From Tung-p'ò down there were 16 men in all, experts in literature, poetry, calligraphy, painting, and antiquities, real heroes of their kind, besides great Buddhist and Taoist priests. They all stood high above the common level, and their fame has reached even foreign countries all over the world. People of future generations may find it worth while not only to look at this picture but also to imitate these men."

Alas, the opportunity is no longer ours; Li Kung-lin's great picture is lost without a trace, but through Chao Mêng-fu's excellent copy, which will be discussed in a later chapter, we may still gain an idea about the composition and the characterization of the famous scholars of this golden era.

The same fate has befallen Li Kung-lin's Buddhist pictures. We can no longer be sure that any of them has been preserved in the original, but some of the compositions are known through what seems to be faithful copies, pictures which

retain something of the master's very original, sometimes humorous or fantastic interpretation of the traditional motives. They make us realize the truth of Têng Ch'un's remark in *Hua Chi*:—

“His Buddhist paintings were always strange and made to startle the common people; yet, he did not neglect the important points (of iconography). Once he painted a long-robed Kuanyin, whose girdle was more than one half longer than the whole figure. For Lü Chi-fu he painted another Kuanyin resting on a rock; it was of a type that never had been seen before. He also painted a Kuanyin seated in meditation, cross-legged and with folded hands which really gave the impression of meditation. It was said about this that the posture expressed a happiness which was in the heart and not simply in the image. From this could be seen that when a thing is done by a noble man and great scholar it is truly significant.”

Li Kung-lin was probably more than any other painter responsible for the elegant type of the long-robed Kuanyin, standing on the water or seated on a rock, which became so popular from the late Sung to the early Ming period, but none of his Kuanyins has, as yet, been identified. The only Buddhist pictures by Li, which have become known through early copies or imitations, are various representations of Lohans, both on a large and on a small scale. The former, which are executed in colour, will be discussed presently; among the latter, which are done in the characteristic *pai miao* technique, may be recalled the album leaves in the Freer Gallery and a long scroll in the National Museum in Peking. All these compositions are remarkable for their imaginative features and expressiveness. In the Peking scroll the Lohans are shown moving through water and air as mystic superhuman beings endowed with powers to overcome the elemental forces of nature. The execution with hair-sharp lines is somewhat dry, but the fascination of the conceptions has not been lost in the translation.

Another picture of a similar type, though perhaps superior in brush-work (I know it only in a reproduction), is the so-called *Drunken Priest* in Mrs. Eugène Meyer's collection. Waley points out (p. 199) that it really is an illustration to a poem by the priest-calligrapher Huai-su, in which he says, that “I deserve that my portrait should be inserted in the Drunken Priest picture”. The composition shows the old man seated on a stone, writing on a scroll which is held before him by a boy, while two other servants are approaching with large wine-pots. The situation is replete with life but, to judge by a reproduction, the execution does not possess the strength of the conception.

The imitations after the master seem to have had a ready market even in his lifetime, as the demand for his works grew larger than the supply, particularly since his right arm had become lame from rheumatism. We are told in *Hua Chien* that a certain scholar, called Ch'iao Chung, imitated him so successfully that his pictures were often taken for the master's work, and also that the monk Fan-lung from Wu-hsing, followed him very closely, though his figures were spiritless and his horses poor. A long scroll in the Freer Gallery representing “Lohans moving through Forests and Sea”, is attributed to Fan-lung and bears witness to this dependence.¹

¹ Cf. *Chinese Paintings in American Collections*, pl. 93.

The composition is full of fantastic details, the holy men are riding on all sorts of beasts and dragons, and the execution with a very fine brush is elegant and skilful, but comparatively dry and superficial. The picture may serve to illustrate a whole class of minor ink paintings, representing Taoist or Buddhist worthies, which often pass under the name of Li Lung-mien. They are executed in the *pai miao* style with more or less refinement and skill but lacking in vitality and strength of brush-work. According to the tradition reported in *Hua Chi*, Li Kung-lin always worked with a fine brush on paper and cut down his pictures to the smallest possible size, a statement which, however, contains a considerable amount of exaggeration.

There can, as a matter of fact, be little doubt that Li Kung-lin also executed larger pictures in colour on silk, though none of them has been preserved. Figure paintings on a large scale from the Sung period are, with the exception of some Buddhist pictures, nowadays extremely rare. As a probable example of this class of painting may be mentioned a portrait of *A Young Lady in White* (94 cm. high) in the Freer Gallery in Washington. (Pl. 30.) She is standing upright holding a fan in the one hand and a basket in the other, wearing a very stylish long dress, which reaches down over the feet and is kept together at the waist with a long sash. The design is characterized by wonderful simplicity, and the white colouring must have been charming, but is now largely worn off, which makes the lines of the folds stand out too strong and hard.

The traditional attribution (on an old label) to Ho Ch'ung, a contemporary of Li Lung-mien may be correct. The picture seems at least to be of the period, and the artist is recorded in *Shu Hua P'u* as a good portrait painter, though the historical data about him are scanty. He was, however, a *hsiu ts'ai* and a friend of Su Tung-p'o, who, when he sat as a model for the painter, asked him: "Why do you make my portrait?" To which the artist replied: "because it amuses me to make it!"

In the year 1080 he was commissioned to paint a posthumous portrait of a prominent old country baron, which then, on the days of memorial services, was exhibited in the sacrificial hall. The notice is interesting, because it shows that ancestral portraits were, at least in the Sung dynasty, done by real artists, and classified as works of art just as well as the religious paintings. It was only in later times that this type of painting lost most of its artistic significance.

Li Kung-lin's influence as a figure-painter is, however, more evident in the field of religious art. According to a tradition, which is particularly fostered in Japan, he created a new type of Lohan, the Buddhist patriarchs, who became so popular in the religious art of the Sung period.

Four different types of Chinese Lohan paintings have been distinguished by some Japanese authorities, i.e. Kuan-hsiu's, Li Lung-mien's, Chang Ssü-kung's, and Lu Hsin-chung's,¹ but it is evident that the greatest difference is between the

¹ Cf. M. W. De Visser, *The Arhats in China and Japan*. A series of articles first published in *Ostasiat. Zeitschrift*, and issued as a separate volume, 1923. The Japanese authority quoted here on p. 129 is: *Nihon hyakkwa daijiten*.

two first types; the two last being merely decorative or realistic elaborations of the second type, which retained a leading influence during the Sung and Yüan dynasties. The same authority claims that "in Li Lung-mien's style the expression of the *miraculous power* of the Arhats was made the chief object, whereas additional matters, like the variegated colours of the garments and their ornamental patterns, were treated as important details (which were more emphasized in Chang Ssü-kung's pictures). This became the commonest style. The centre of this style was Southern China; it was especially in vogue in the Dhyāna (Zen) monasteries and introduced into Japan by Dhyāna priests. This school also propagated the cult of the 500 Arhats". It weakened gradually in the hands of inferior painters, who "laid stress upon the outer appearance instead of upon the inner greatness and slid down into the stream of a naturalistic style which wiped away the last traces of divinity and majesty of the saints. Yet, Li Lung-mien's mighty art maintained its dominating position down to the end of the Yüan dynasty; when Ming began, it passed away for ever".

The above presentation of the problem concerning the representation of Lohans in Chinese painting is apparently based on old temple traditions rather than on still existing documents or paintings. It does not appear from the Chinese sources known to us whether any of Li Lung-mien's Lohan paintings were on a large scale and represented single figures, but such may have existed. We have previously mentioned some minor ink paintings, scrolls and album leaves, traditionally attributed to the master, which represent the Eighteen Lohans, and besides these may be remembered the very famous picture of the Five Hundred Lohans which is described in great detail in *Hua Chi*. But this, too, seems to have been an ink painting remarkable for its excellent brush-work and its fantastic variety of motives, which nevertheless were presented "in accordance with the Buddhist principles".

The finest Lohan paintings on a large scale in colour, which have been associated with the name of Li Kung-lin, belong to the set of Daitokuji in Kyoto, out of which ten pictures were secured for the Museum in Boston and some by private collectors, so that only eighty-two pictures remain in the possession of the temple.¹ The original number was 100, and each picture represents five Lohans with their attendants and followers. The traditional attribution of these pictures has been disproved by the discovery of the signatures of the two painters Chou Chi-ch'ang and Lin T'ing-kuei on one of the pictures in Daitokuji, and through the inscription we also learn that they were executed in 1178 for a monastery in Ning-po (Chekiang). It may, however, be admitted that the style and general character of these pictures reflect to some extent the art of Li Kung-lin. One or two examples must here suffice as representatives of the whole series; the general principles of composition are the same in them all, though they are applied with considerable variation and the execution is somewhat uneven. My observations on a great

¹ The ten pictures of the Boston Museum are all reproduced in *Chinese Paintings in American Collections*, ii, pls. 56-64.

number of the pictures in Kyoto lead me to the conclusion that Chou Chi-ch'ang was the greater of the two otherwise quite unknown painters.

One of the finest is the picture which shows *Five Lohans descending on Clouds* towards a man (of Hindu type) who is seated on a camel, holding with both hands a coral crown as if he were offering it to the holy men. (Pl. 31.) By the position of the figures and the design of the clouds a kind of double curve is formed which sweeps along the tall picture and imbues it with an airy movement. The composition is perfectly adapted to the high and narrow proportions of the picture, and the characterization of the Lohans (who now have become more Chinese than Indian) is carried out with great concentration. The same kind of curving and sweeping vertical design may be observed in several of these paintings, sometimes accentuated by trees and water-courses, sometimes by the formations of rocks and clouds, always imparting a harmonious unity and strength to the decorative effect.

But similar results may also be obtained by other arrangements. There are, for instance, pictures of a more symmetrical design, as may be seen in the one which represents the *Buddhist Patriarchs triumphing over Taoist Heretics*. (Pl. 32.) The scene is laid in a grotto. In the upper part of the picture stands a large altar silhouetted against the opening of the cave. A roll of documents lying upon the altar radiates light and is not consumed by the altar-fire that seems to shrink from it. The figures below are grouped in a V-shape which repeats the direction of the rays above. The attention of all the men is fixed upon the altar. The five Lohans are obviously rejoicing over the phenomenon, while their adversaries, the Taoist, show considerable consternation. The whole picture is dominated by the miracle. Our attention is drawn towards a luminous point, and from it issues the force that creates such an intense reaction in the different figures. The artist has succeeded in representing the irresistible spiritual power of the miracle by reflecting it in the figures and in a design which accentuates the focal point and radiates like the rays of the altar.

The compositions in this series are characteristic of a whole group of Chinese figure-paintings, be they religious or profane, which are designed on tall and narrow scrolls. The main figures are placed in the upper or middle section of the picture and drawn on a somewhat larger scale than the rest. They mark not only the ideal but also the decorative centre of the composition, and as they look down on the rest of the composition, which contains the minor figures, the beholder is induced to do likewise. The arrangement is essentially ideological, but in accordance with strictly decorative principles, so that not only the main idea but also the unity and significance of the design at once become clear.

Among the Lohan pictures attributed to Li Kung-lin should be remembered the large kakemonos belonging to the Imperial Art Academy in Tokyo.¹ They are only two now, but must have formed parts of a series of sixteen (or eighteen) pictures, each representing a Lohan accompanied by a worshipper or an attendant. The characterization of the holy men, who are seated on cliffs, under the shadow

¹ Often reproduced, for instance, in *Toyo Bijutsu Taikwan*, viii, pls. 23-4.

of some trees, is excellent, but the execution is of a kind that nowadays is considered more characteristic of the thirteenth than of the twelfth century. This approximate date is also proved by their stylistic resemblance with the famous sets of Sixteen Lohans in the Museum in Boston and in Shōkokuji in Kyoto, which are signed by Lu Hsin-chung, an artist who worked at Ning-po at the end of the Southern Sung dynasty (and possibly also later). These two sets are alike in design and must both have been executed by Lu Hsin-chung and his assistants, though, as far as my observations go, the pictures in Boston are somewhat finer in quality (with the exception of one which is a Japanese substitute). Although these Lohans have never been associated with Li Kung-lin himself, they continue the type introduced by him, and as they furthermore must be reckoned among the most important Buddhist pictures preserved from the Sung period, a few words about them may not be out of place.¹

Generally speaking, the expression and significance of these paintings depend more on their excellent designs, in line as well as in colour, than on any particular refinement or individual accents in the brush-work. The execution is good, almost surprisingly so, considering the amount of labour involved in the long series. In the best of them the drawing actually becomes a means for communicating a spiritual significance, and the colours may also serve to enhance this, at the same time adding greatly to the decorative effect of the compositions.

Particularly beautiful and expressive in this respect is the picture of the fourteenth Lohan. (Pl. 33.) He is seated in contemplation by the bank of a lotus pond, the figure being placed towards one side of the picture. On the other side grows a curving willow-tree. Behind it a servant approaches with something on a tray—but hesitating, as if he were afraid of disturbing the holy man, who sits motionless, contemplating the message of the lotus flower. Tranquilly rises the trunk of the willow balancing the figure and accompanying by its long curve the lines of the mantlefolds. But the tender foliage of the tree and the flowers in the pond move softly in the evening breeze. The harmony of the design reflects the deep peace in the soul of the holy man.

A similar correspondence between the decorative design and the psychology of the motive may be observed in some of the other of these Lohan pictures. As an example may still be pointed out the picture which represents the eighth patriarch watching the fight between two dragons. (Pl. 34.) Here everything is a sudden outburst of wrath and fear. The slim bodies of the furious dragons move like flashes of lightning through the splashing waves. The holy man jumps up from his seat on the rocky bank to save his feet from the raised claws of the animals; he clings to a trunk that bends across the scene but keeps his eyes intensely fixed on the fight. The tree and the man are intersecting exactly in the centre of the picture; they are marking the two main diagonals of the composition, which thus gains a perfect balance in spite of all the impetuosity, which also is reflected in the quick and

¹ Detailed historical information about these pictures and reproductions of 15 Lohans of the Boston Museum are included in *Chinese Pictures in American Collections*, ii, pls. 65–79.

energetic brush-work. The picture is an original conception of unusual dramatic expression.

There are other series of Lohan paintings of the late Sung period, as for instance, the pictures signed: "Hsi-chin Chü-shih," some of which belong to the museum in Berlin and some to Mr. Hara Kumizo in Tokyo, but they are hardly on a level with Lu Hsin-chung's best works, nor do they reveal any closer connection with the Li Lung-mien tradition.¹ And we know nothing more about this monk painter than about Lu Hsin-chung; he, too, worked at Ning-po while the Sung dynasty was still reigning in Hang-chou. It is evident that Ning-po and the great monasteries in the mountains beyond the city were a main centre of Buddhist painting in the South Sung period, and as Ning-po also was the port for the trade and inter-communications with Japan, it is easily explained how so many of these Buddhist pictures have reached Japan and from there (to some extent) America. This also applies to certain Buddhist paintings ascribed to Chang Ssü-kung, an artist who is unknown in China but placed in the highest class of Buddhist painters by Soami in his *Kundaikwan*.² Several pictures, representing various Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and also priest portraits are ascribed to him in Japan, and their stylistic characteristics point to the late Sung period. According to the popular Japanese tradition to which reference has been made above, Chang Ssü-kung would also have followed Li Kung-lin's directions, particularly in the representation of Lohans, differing, however, from the master by more insistence on ornamental detail and less power of characterization. The pictures ascribed to him, many of which have been reproduced in Japanese publications,³ are all executed in an exquisitely fine technique with abundant use of fine gold ornaments on deep reddish, greenish, or brownish pigments. They include, however, no Lohans, but a portrait of a priest, Pu-k'ung Chin-kang, which belongs to Kozanji (temple) in Kyoto. (Pl. 35.) The priest is seated in meditation (though with open eyes) in a large chair which is covered by a richly ornamented drapery. His legs are folded under him, his hands joined in the lap. The figure is firmly placed; the rather stout body and full face are convincingly real, though rendered without any apparent modelling in light and shade, almost entirely with lines and some slight gradations in the tones. By this method a decorative unity has been preserved which is seldom found, to the same extent, in Western portraiture. It is as if the refinement of the execution and the absence of all strong material accents had enhanced the suggestiveness and the spiritual import of the portrait. The best Buddhist pictures of the Sung period, whether by known masters or by unknown monk-painters, possess this peculiar quality of suggesting a mental state or an inner reality without neglecting or violating the bodily form. They are great decorative works of art, which through the harmonious unity of their design and the peculiar sublimation of the material form convey much more than can be defined by words or by shapes.

¹ Another approximately contemporary series of the Sixteen Lohans belongs to Seiryōji near Kyoto; they are supposed to have been brought over from China by the priest Chonen.

² *Kundaikwan Sayūchōki*, translated by O. Kummel, *Ostasiat. Zeitschrift*, i, p. 14.

³ Cf. *Kokka*, nos. 149, 249, *Toyo Bijutsu Taikwan*, vol. viii, pls. 31-3.

II

THE SOUTHERN SUNG PERIOD

(1) *Hang-chou, the Beautiful City of Art. Chu Hsi's Philosophy*

The years of warfare, flight, and humiliation which followed immediately after the fall of Pien-liang (K'ai-fêng) into the hands of the Chin Tartars and the carrying away into captivity of the old Emperor Hui Tsung (1127) evidently caused a serious disorganization also in artistic activity, but the pause was not very long. Old traditions were not lost or forgotten. The Emperor Kao Tsung had no sooner re-established the government of the dynasty in Hang-chou (1138) before he devoted himself with the greatest enthusiasm and success to the reorganization of the Painting Academy and other institutions of similar kind that had existed under his predecessors in K'ai-fêng. He was himself a sincere lover of art and a very good calligraphist, and in his work of reorganization he had the support of several of those men who had been prominent members of Hui Tsung's model Academy. Like most of the scholars and officials, who had stood in personal contact with the court, they fled from the burning capital and hid themselves where best they could (like Li T'ang and Hsiao Chao, who met in the forests of the T'ai-hang mountains), but when the new order of things had been established, they gradually drifted towards the new capital, drawn thither by their sympathies or by imperial orders. Kao Tsung spared no efforts to reunite the old scholars and artists in Hang-chou and to make them feel the solace of the imperial favours. When the compulsory interruption was over, the play of Sung painting was continued, the main actors were the same as before, but the scenery of the new act was completely changed.

And what scenery! Hang-chou, the city of lakes and bridges, pavilions and temples, "the finest and noblest in the world," to quote Marco Polo, standing "as it were in the water and surrounded by water. . . . And truly a trip on this Lake was a much more charming recreation than can be enjoyed on land. For on the one side lies the city in its entire length, so that the spectators in the barges, from the distance at which they stand, take in the whole prospect in its full beauty and grandeur, with its numberless palaces, temples, monasteries, and gardens, full of lofty trees, sloping to the shore".

Marco Polo's enthusiasm for Hang-chou, as it stood in its days of glory at the end of the thirteenth century, was certainly not ill-founded. He was no incompetent judge; he came from Venice; he had seen many of the most famous cities of the world, but none that he considered equal to the great city of Kinsay (as the place then was called) in beauty of nature, architectural grandeur and refinement of life. Art and nature had here combined into a peculiarly rich and picturesque harmony. We may well believe him, though the "beautiful palaces and mansions of the richest and most exquisite structure that you can imagine" no longer exist on the shores of the Western Lake. Yet, nature is here the same as in the days of

glory, and the soft hazy light may help us to forget that the temples and pavilions have been ruined or rebuilt. They are all steeped in an atmosphere which seems to retain an echo of the great harmony that enchanted Messer Marco—it lives in the hush of the bamboo groves and in the rustling of the gnarled pines on the terraces along the mountain slopes. At least, so it was when I visited the place some fifteen years ago. The inspiration was still there, when the spring morning sprinkled its dew over the flowering soil and the shapes of the great trees slowly emerged from the mist—it was there, when the evening spread its veil over the quiet lake, where a lonely fisherman lingered in his boat, and the nightingale took up “the self-same song” in the shrubs at the foot of the old pagoda.

This was a place where nature held before the eyes of man motives of unsurpassed decorative beauty, and where it revealed its secrets in symbols of tones and shapes. It tuned the creative genius of the men who lived here and made them realize “the vision or the waking dream”. One may well ask, if ever there has been a closer harmony between the painters and the world around them than during these years of deep after-glow in Hang-chou, when the boundaries between the seen and the unseen universe melted away in paintings which reflected the beauty of the boundless through a few strokes of the writing brush. The landscape painting of the South Sung period could never have blossomed into such matchless fragrance, had it not been for the rich soil and inspiring surroundings of old Hang-chou.

The spiritual and philosophical atmosphere in Hang-chou was also quite different from that of the Confucian doctrines and the Taoist dreams which prevailed in K'ai-fêng. The opposition between these was practically effaced in the system of the Neo-Confucian philosophers, who sought to reconcile not only these two traditional currents of Chinese thought but also to blend them with important elements of the Buddhist religion. This new attempt at an all-inclusive synthetic philosophy was in itself a very characteristic expression for the intellectual life of the Southern Sung period, and though the endeavour was supported by the scholars and philosophers more than by the artists, it became of such far-reaching and general importance that a few words may here be added about its foremost representative, the philosopher Chu Hsi (1130–1200). His synthetic system, which became known as the *Ju chiao*, remained as a matter of fact for the next six hundred years the most widely accepted and authoritative interpretation of the Confucian philosophy.

Chu Hsi offered a philosophical explanation or reason for the Confucian morals and showed how virtue (*jên*) and righteousness (*i*) should be cultivated by each individual and not only by the ruling prince, who in the old Confucian system had held the main moral responsibility for the people.¹ The root of his system was the *T'ai Ch'i*, a kind of cosmic essence, which sometimes has been explained as a divine power and sometimes as a cosmic ether. It is, according to Chu Hsi, both immanent and transcendent at the same time, something which animates every organism but does

¹ For a detailed account of Chu Hsi's philosophy, see J. P. Bruce, *Chu Hsi, Philosophy of Human Nature*, London, 1917.

not exist outside of the manifested universe. It has, as a matter of fact, a rather striking resemblance with Tao, the fundamental principle or all pervading consciousness of the Taoists, though it may be of a less purely spiritual kind. Chi operated through Li, which is "the mould" in which life is shaped or the universal order and law of nature, which is, indeed, another name for nature's fundamental operations. Chu Hsi calls Li "the master of the house, who receives and remains eternally, while the guests are passing". In other words, it is the law which means order and harmony; no life or movement (which is the simplest form of life) can exist outside of this; Chi and Li are indissolubly interblended, the one is inconceivable without the other in manifested life, and here they appear through the two fundamental principles Yang and Yin, light and darkness, warmth and cold, male and female—in full accordance with the old Chinese cosmogony. Through the co-operation of these principles evolution proceeds. It is an eternal movement, which goes on in cycles, in periods of activity and rest, or *kalpas*, as the Buddhists called them. Our universe will be followed by another, as the plant which produces seed is followed by another plant, but whether this is simply a continuous transformation or a growth and progress towards a higher state, Chu Hsi does not tell. It seems as if he accepted only the formal side of the Buddhist idea of evolution without its spiritual import. The human soul is to him like a particle of ice on the surface of the water; it remains for a time until it melts away again into the great mass.

It is rather surprising to see how freely Chu Hsi borrowed the elements of his system from various sources, seeking to reach a synthesis which could serve as a philosophical basis for the Confucian morals, and in doing so he used rather vague terms and images which leave room for different interpretations. But even if his philosophy contained little new of fundamental importance, it was a brilliant intellectual construction, supple, inspiring, and beautiful, as the spirit that manifests in all the creations of the Southern Sung period. But it is also easy to understand how this system later on, in the hands of Chu Hsi's followers, could be developed into a scholastic bulwark for the innate conservatism of the Chinese people.

More important than the Neo-Confucian philosophy for the artistic activity in Hang-chou became, however, the refflorescence of Dhyāna or Ch'an Buddhism which now, during the Southern Sung period, had its golden age in China. It was a spiritual undercurrent intimately blended with the creative tendencies of the epoch and it found expression in some of the most extraordinary works of art that ever have been accomplished with brush and ink. We shall have occasion to add a few words about its aims and ideals in discussing the works of the foremost Ch'an painter.

(2) *The Old Academicians Reunited in Hang-chou*

Figure, Landscape, and Flower Painters

The oldest and most influential of the painters who joined the new Academy in Hang-chou, was Li T'ang, *tzū*, Hsi-ku, from Ho-yang in Honan. He was then a man over 75 years old; the best part of his life and artistic activity had been spent in K'ai-fêng, where he was an official at the Academy and belonged to the circle of artists who gathered around the emperor. He served thus as a strong link with

the past, transmitting to the younger generation the principles of style and technique which had been developed in the great days of Northern Sung painting. He is mentioned as the teacher or model of most of the younger men in Hang-chou and must, indeed, have exercised a great personal influence. The Emperor Kao Tsung made him the Director of the new Academy, conferred upon him the Golden Girdle and called him often flatteringly "T'ang Li", thus inferring that he was comparable to the great Li Ssü-hsün of the T'ang period, an artist with whom Li T'ang had nothing in common. He lived to the age of 80; the year of his death is unknown, but must have fallen shortly after 1130.¹

His artistic education was, no doubt, eclectic as that of most of the painters of the Northern Sung period. He was old enough to have known Kuo Hsi and the traditions of heroic landscape painting, which survived from the beginning of the period, a supposition which is supported by a large and important landscape painting in the Palace Museum in Peking. The picture is catalogued in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi* as Li T'ang's work and nowadays accepted as such, though its general characteristics of style are distinctly earlier than we would expect in a work by this master.² It is a huge mountain scene with snow and a sharp wind shaking the trees. The very small figures are battling on the road against the storm or tucked away in the low pavilions between the cliffs. The whole conception is of the traditional type first introduced by Li Ch'êng and further developed by Kuo Hsi, and the mountains are deeply "folded" as in the works of these predecessors. The picture has a considerable historical interest, but it is by no means characteristic of Li T'ang as he appears in his later creations.

These are mostly pictures in which the figures and the animals play more important parts than the landscapes which form the settings.

Not a few of these pictures may almost be called realistic genre-scenes, brightened by a tone of humour and enlivened by a characterization which sometimes verges on caricature. Typical examples of such works by Li T'ang are the *Wedding Procession* in Mr. Lo Chên-yü's collection (known to me through the colour reproduction in *Kokka*, 261) and the *Village Doctor* in the National Museum in Peking. The former picture, a short scroll, slightly coloured, illustrates the arrival of a country bride at her future husband's family. The procession is made up of a very mixed array of people, some on foot, some riding on donkey or buffalo, who move and act with the uncomfortable dignity of loafers and peasants dressed up for the occasion in borrowed garments. The scene takes place under some old willows; the whole thing is like an illustration to a rustic country tale.

The other picture represents a *Village Surgeon* in the act of practising his art on the back of an elderly man. (Pl. 36.) The victim is held in a kneeling position by the united efforts of two assistants who pull his arms with all their might, while

¹ The biographical information *re* Li T'ang is collected in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*; further notes about his works in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. 10.

² Reproduced in *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, i, pl. 5.

a boy thrusts a clog into his mouth at the same time hiding himself behind the back of one of the assistants. The doctor applies his knife with an air of utmost concentration and artfulness, but behind him stands his servant maliciously laughing at the performance. The conception has a certain resemblance to well-known Dutch and Flemish genre paintings of the seventeenth century, but never did an Ostade or a Teniers impart to their paintings as much of momentary life and rustic reality. The old willow which spreads its soft foliage over the figures adds something to the atmosphere of fugitive lightness that envelopes the whole picture. It is slightly coloured which, however, does not conceal the swift and spirited brush-work.

Li T'ang acquired also a special fame for his paintings of water-buffaloes, the most characteristic animals in the country around Hang-chou. In this particular field he followed in the footsteps of Tai Sung, and succeeded so well that some of his pictures were taken as works by the T'ang master, a statement that seems surprising, as his style and brush-work are easily recognizable by the light touch and the minute definition of every detail. This may be observed, for instance, in the excellent picture in the Boston Museum representing, according to the old label, *Returning Drunk from a Village Meeting in the Spring*. (Pl. 37.) The old grey-beard, who is seated in a somewhat uncomfortable position on a scraggy buffalo, would no doubt tumble down, if he were not supported by a servant who walks at the side, while another urchin walks ahead pulling the slow animal by a long string along the sandy river bank. The swift and easy, and yet highly detailed, brush-work is exactly the same as in the *Bridal Procession* and the *Village Doctor* described above. All these pictures offer some reason for Chang Ch'ou's remark that Li T'ang's brush-work was of the highest class (*miao pin*), "even Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei could not reach it in their famous paintings".

Several important pictures by Li T'ang are mentioned by the same authority, partly landscapes with figures and partly legendary illustrations. He must have been a remarkably many-sided artist, altogether original and quite unhampered by earlier traditions, which he evidently knew very well. The old critics claim that he started a new kind of landscape painting, possibly a more intimate and idyllic type than had prevailed during the earlier generation, and it seems quite possible that he contributed more than appears from his still preserved works to the development of the type of romantic or expressionistic landscapes with large figures which became one of the finest products of Southern Sung.

Most of the painters who were prominent members of the Hang-chou Academy had been in a similar position in K'ai-fêng before "the crossing of the river". They were experienced academicians, well acquainted with classic traditions, more or less influenced by Hui Tsung's æsthetic romanticism and over-refinement in technical matters, but none of them was a creative personality equal to Kuo Hsi or Li Lung-mien. They painted mostly miscellaneous subjects, religious, legendary, or historical, besides landscapes, birds, and flowers; the specialization was not so

strict as in former times, possibly because painting had become more than before a matter of technical skill and faithful representation. But the general level was very high, and the prominent personalities were much more numerous than can be discussed within the strict limits of the present publication.

Su Han-ch'ên from K'ai-fêng had been a *tai chao* already in Hui Tsung's Academy and stood in no less favour with the Emperors Kao Tsung and Hsiao Tsung.¹ He was a prominent academician in the Shao-hsing (1131-1162) and Lung-hsing (1163-1164) periods and was honoured with the title of a *ch'ao hsin lang*. His activity does not seem to have extended much beyond 1164. Su Han-ch'ên's fame as a painter was based partly on his Buddhist and Taoist pictures and partly on his genre-paintings. The former included frescoes in the Wu-shêng miao and the Hsien-yin kuan, two Taoist temples in Hang-chou, but all these religious paintings are destroyed. The works by Su Han-ch'ên which still remain are all representations from the life of children and ladies, i.e. genre-scenes of the same type as Chou Fang's and Chou Wen-chü's pictures, though treated in a different spirit, sometimes with slightly humorous accents.

A very characteristic example of this class of Su Han-ch'ên's work is the *Toy Pedlar* (Pl. 38), a picture which exists in several editions, the best among them being the one now in the Palace Museum in Peking (from the Ch'ien Lung collection), but another version, belonging to Mr. Nezu in Tokyo, may also be of the period. The pedlar is represented pushing a little cart with a high scaffolding on which many kinds of toys and trinkets are suspended. Five small children have gathered around the cart, one with his baby-brother on the back (as still is the custom in China); some of them are standing in mute adoration of the coveted treasures, but two are giving outlet to their excitement in a brisk fight. It is altogether a gay and multi-coloured thing like the thrilling joy of the children.

Two more pictures in the same collection represent other scenes of a similar nature. In one of them a numerous company of children are playing or amusing themselves after the fashion of older folks in a garden by a lotus pond; it is the celebration of the "Dragon festival" by the most youthful citizens, of whom some are still in tender babyhood. The garden landscape with the pavilion and the balustrade form a charming setting for the scene. The other is known as *Wu jui*, and represents somewhat older children with masks engaged in a theatrical performance, which evidently has reached a rather exciting climax when some of the actors are fighting. It is more burlesque than the other two pictures, but just as true to nature and clever in its characterization of the amusing motive.²

Quite different is the fan-shaped picture in the Boston Museum which carries the painter's signature and represents *A Young Lady at her Toilet*. (Pl. 39.) The scene

¹ The biographical informations *re* Su Han-ch'ên are collected in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*.

² The three pictures are reproduced in *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vi, vii, and xii. A picture in the National Museum in Peking representing market scenes with food vendors, etc., which carries Su Han-ch'ên's signature, is evidently a copy.

is again a balustraded garden terrace. The slender lady sits on a low bench in front of a large lacquered table which is provided with a high screen-like back. Flower-vases, boxes, and toilet utensils are spread on the table, most prominent among them being a large mirror, in which the lady's face is reflected. A youthful maid is standing at the side of the bench ready to offer her services to the mistress. A single branch of a blossoming plum-tree is stretching out as a greeting of spring from the rockery at the edge of the picture. She sits quite still, listening—dreaming of the spring-nights on the Western Lake.

Chao Po-chü, *tzü*, Ch'ien-li, was already mentioned among the painters whom Têng Ch'un classifies as relatives of the imperial family.¹ He had been a member of Hui Tsung's Academy, and stylistically he stands much closer to the older generation than to the new currents which originated in Hang-chou, but he was the favourite painter of Kao Tsung and continued his activity practically during the whole reign of the emperor (1127–1162). As an official he rose to the position of Keeper of the Imperial Seal (Governor?) for Eastern Chekiang. The emperor employed him for the decoration of a big hall (Chi-ying tien), a work which he executed together with his brother, Chao Po-hsiao, to the great satisfaction of the monarch; but most of his pictures, which included all kinds of subjects, from landscapes and flowers to portraits and Taoist figures, were executed on a comparatively small scale in a highly refined style based on studies of Li Ssü-hsün's and Wang Wei's works. Chao Po-chü seems to have been a distinctly conservative artist, highly skilled and well fitted for an imperial court-painter.

Chao Po-chü's name has in later times been connected particularly with landscapes and illustrative paintings executed in the *ch'ing lü pai* manner, i.e. with bright green colouring (beside red and white) and gold outlines. This striking decorative method was evidently derived from Li Ssü-hsün's garden landscapes, but Chao Po-chü made it still more effective by increasing the contrasts of gold and green, thus giving the impetus to a type of painting which survived far into the Ming period, when it became a more and more artificial kind of decoration. Examples of it are by no means uncommon, most of them being more like embroideries than paintings, but Chao Po-chü's own works in this style have become very rare.² The best example known to me is a scroll lately acquired by the Boston Museum, which represents *The First Emperor of the Han Dynasty entering the Ch'in Capital*. (Pl. 40.) The picture, which carries the painter's seal and signature, is a very striking piece of decorative illustration executed on a small scale, but with such a strong and clear definition of the lines and masses that it would stand considerable enlargement without losing its artistic beauty. Of the great victorious army, which is marching along the winding mountain paths, only small detachments are shown (Pl. 41); the rest is hidden behind the high ranges, but we get a vivid impression of its importance and steady progress by the innumerable pennants and standards which

¹ *Hua Chi*, first section. Chao Po-chü is not included in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*, but a certain amount of information about his works is to be found in *Ching-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. 10.

² Two such pictures ascribed to the painter are reproduced in *Chung-kuo Ming Hua Chi*.

are fluttering in long lines above the ridges of the green cliffs. (Pl. 42.) The device has been utilized with remarkable success and made it possible for the artist to suggest large distances, space, and continuous movement within the frame-work of the strongly conventionalized clouds and mountains. In the second half of the picture the leaders of the army are galloping on horseback over the bridge and through the fortified gateway, passing into the palace city of Ch'in Shih Huang Ti, a dream-like place where nature and art are combined as beautifully as in a poetic legend. The high towers are vying with the craggy cliffs, the terraces are spreading far over the water, and the clouds and mist are circling as protective smoke-screens around the open pavilions. The final scene shows the Han emperor receiving homage from the kneeling palace ladies.

Chao Po-chü was a master of such illustrative picture-scrolls, in which historical events were freely translated into poetic chronicles, and actual observations blended into decorative designs of bright green, red, white, and gold. He painted, for instance, the Emperor Ming Huang's historic journey to Shu (when the capital was sacked by An Lu-shan's soldiers), and Tao Yüan-ming's famous tale about the enchanted peach-garden. Both these pictures were copied by Ch'iu Ying in the sixteenth century and by later artists. A picture purporting to be Ch'iu Ying's copy after Chao Po-chü's *Ming Huang Hsing Shu* is in the Museum in Stockholm, but it is evidently of later origin. The other Ch'iu Ying copy is mentioned with highest commendations by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang; he valued it at a price equal to that of fifteen cities, and regretted that he had not enough money to acquire it. Most of Chao Po-chü's famous scrolls seem to have been of this kind; i.e. decoratively conventionalized landscapes with illustrative figures. He painted *The Fairies of the Lilacs*, *The Drug of Immortality*, *The Visit to the T'ai Mountain*, *The Boats Coming out of the Gorges*, etc., but also actual portraits, as for instance, Su Tung-p'o in contemplation at the river bank (*Tung-p'o Yüeh Shui t'u*) and studies of birds and flowers. Têng Ch'un mentions in particular a fan-painting representing a tortuous juniper among strangely shaped rocks, and says that he made an abundance of small pictures, landscapes, animals, birds, fruits, and flowers. One example of these is the album leaf in the Stockholm Museum, representing a mountain pavilion in mist, and accompanied by a certificate by Yü Chi, the artist's great admirer in the Yüan period, in which he says that Chao Po-chü painted it after a composition by Li Lung-mien.

Ma Ho-chih from Ch'ien-t'ang belonged to the same set. He stood in high favour at court under the Emperor Kao Tsung and at the beginning of Hsiao Tsung's reign, and rose to the position of vice-president of the Board of Works.¹ He painted Buddhist motives as well as landscapes and earned his greatest fame as an illustrator of the ancient ballads and odes, known as *Mao Shih* from their first compiler during the Western Han dynasty. The Emperor Kao Tsung amused

¹ The historical informations about Ma Ho-chih are in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*, but interesting additional observations are offered by Chang Ch'ou in *Ch'ing-ho Shua Hua Fang*, vol. 10.

himself by copying and commenting these poems and Ma Ho-chih was selected to illustrate the imperial calligraphies. There is said to have been no fewer than 300 such poems arranged into a number of sets with different names; whether Kao Tsung actually copied them all with his own hand (as asserted by tradition) is far from certain; in any case, Ma Ho-chih died before he had accomplished all the 300 illustrations. Some scrolls, each containing ten or twelve of these poems with illustrations, were until lately in the Imperial Manchu Household collection, and at least one of them has been brought out in facsimile reproduction in Japan. Whether these scrolls are actually the originals of the imperial writer and his artist friend (as commonly supposed) may be subject to some doubt. If not, they are at least very skilfully executed early copies, which retain the characteristic style of the writer as well as of the painter.

The interest of the paintings depends less on their reference to the text than on their elements of fresh and spontaneous naturalism. They contain bits of landscape, flowering shrubs, trees, water, birds, and pavilions which serve to form a setting for the *dramatis personæ*. Only in two of these pictures are the figures sketched against the neutral background. Among the most effective may be pointed out the illustrations to *The Bustard's Feather*, *The Faggot Bundle*, and *The Growing Creeper*. (Pl. 43.) The first is made up of the long gnarled branches of an old tree stretching over a foaming stream; two large hen-birds are seated in the tree while their male companions are sailing down to them on widespread wings. The abundant leafage on the wavy branches and the moving birds give it a wonderful air of spaciousness. In the illustration to the *Growing Creeper* a woman is represented seated in a cottage with thatched roof shaded by a large magnolia; she is waiting and waiting for her beloved, who is away in the service of the warlike duke—winter passes and summer passes, the wild creepers along the cottage are growing, growing . . . but the husband does not come back. *The Faggot Bundle* is a landscape with some lightly sketched rocks and shrubs and an old man seated on the hill-side tying up a bundle of faggots. The manifold trees and shrubs are characterized by different types of leaves, drawn in various shades of ink as lightly as if they were blown there by the wind, whilst the resting old man looks almost like another hump on the hillock.

These illustrative drawings formed, no doubt, a most interesting portion of Ma Ho-chih's work, but there are also other pictures by the master executed in a somewhat similar manner and expressing his poetic temperament. Among them should be remembered two pictures in the museums in Peking, i.e. *The Busy Loafer* (*Hsien Mang t'u*), in the Palace Museum, and *The Man with a Stick*, in the National Museum. The former, which is slightly coloured, represents a contented idler in a very scanty costume seated on the ground under a large tree, apparently busy twining a string with the help of his two hands, his foot, and his mouth. It is a very spirited character study of a *lazzarone* with a touch of humour, alive in every brush-stroke. The man walking with a stick under a wind-swept tree is a more

poetic conception expressed with a very light and easy brush in pure ink on paper. (Pl. 44.) In both these pictures, as well as in the above-mentioned illustrations, one may notice a peculiar wavy or jerky rhythm, which becomes most apparent in the drawing of the trees and the folds, a kind of mannerism which evidently was characteristic of Ma Ho-chih. The origin of it may have been his intense interest in Wu Tao-tzŭ's works. Ma Ho-chih is said to have followed Wu Tao-tzŭ so closely that he received the nick-name: "Little Wu." Yet, it may be said that the distance between the two painters, in quality and strength, is emphasized by the superficial resemblance. If Wu's brush-strokes seemed to move with the strength of a storm-wind, the lines in Ma Ho-chih's paintings seem to be fluttering in a gentle breeze. The old critics speak not without reason about the folds of the garments being like swaying willow leaves, and compare the flow of his brush-strokes with sailing clouds or running water.

This transparent lightness and ease of Ma Ho-chih's manner of painting has been well characterized by Chang Ch'ou, who wrote about certain pictures by the master as follows: "Although the pictures are small and the execution seems quite loose and careless, their beauty and expressiveness is very great. Ch'ên Chung-ch'un considered these pictures most wonderful and quite equal to the finest works by Kuo Chung-shu. They had an immaterial quality like a man who takes no cooked food. He formed, indeed, his own style."¹

Li Ti, from Ho-yang in Honan, was also one of the old men who had played important parts in Hui Tsung's Academy. He painted then mostly flowers and birds in a similar fashion as his imperial master and transmitted this mode to the Southern capital, where he passed the main part of his life, and branched out into various kinds of painting, such as animals and landscape. The Emperor Kao Tsung made him the vice-director of the new Academy and bestowed on him the Golden Girdle. He seems to have lived to a great age (like Li T'ang); he was born at the very beginning of the century, and there was a famous picture of his, representing a pair of bamboos in snow, which was signed and dated in accordance with the year 1187. He is sometimes referred to as Li of the three emperors' reigns.²

The majority of Li Ti's pictures mentioned by his biographers are flowers and fruits. He painted branches of peach, plum, cherry, apricot, pear, and apple, and also lotus, hibiscus, and other garden flowers, mostly single stalks with a few leaves. His pictures were small, but they contained the very soul and essence

¹ The two coloured landscape scrolls ascribed to Ma Ho-chih in the National Museum in Peking are evidently later reproductions. They possess a certain interest as historical documents, proving that Ma Ho-chih also worked in the academic style with traditions from Li Ssŭ-hsün, but their artistic importance is very small.

A very fine small fan-painting, ascribed to the master, is in the collection of Mr. Hayasaki in Tokyo. It represents two large boats moored at a river-bank, at the foot of a high gate-tower. The boats and buildings are drawn in a linear style and the picture shows a rather close connection with certain works by Chao Ta-nien and Chao Po-chü.

² The biographical data *re* Li Ti are collected in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*.

of each species; they were admired for their absolute faithfulness and truth rather than for any elaborate design or decorative arrangement.

The best known examples of such small flower-paintings by Li Ti are the two album leaves in Viscount Fukuoka's collection representing *Hibiscus* (also called: *Rose-Mallows*), signed and dated in accordance with the year 1137.¹ They are consequently comparatively early works by the master and may be taken as examples of the highly refined naturalistic style developed in Hui Tsung's Academy. Each one of the two pictures consists simply of a short stalk with two large flowers—white in the one case, pink in the other—and a few leaves in various shades of green. (Pl. 45, 1.) The beauty and fragrance are expressed mainly by the pale and sensitive colouring; reproductions are consequently a very poor substitute for the originals.

The same quality of faultless refinement and simplicity characterizes Li Ti's *Branch of an Apple-tree* in Count Tsuruga's collection, a small picture of green and red tones which have blended into the brownish silk, matured and darkened by age. (Cf. *Kokka*, 144.)

But Li Ti did not paint only flowers and fruits; his bird-paintings were also numerous—geese, cranes, wagtails, doves, and eagles are particularly mentioned—and besides these are mentioned pictures of monkeys, deer, sheep, and pasturing cattle, i.e. water-buffaloes, which take the place of cattle in South China. Among bird-paintings ascribed to him may be mentioned an album leaf in Mr. Henry Oppenheim's collection showing a white swan alighting among rushes. (Pl. 45, 2.) The design is very elegant, the movement of the sailing bird and of the thin rushes, bending in the wind, is beautifully rendered, but they seem to have been subject to some retouching.

The most important pictures by Li Ti still preserved are, however, landscapes with water-buffaloes, not unlike the corresponding compositions by Li T'ang, though perhaps of a somewhat softer and more poetic tone. A very fine and uncommonly large example is the picture in the Palace Museum in Peking, which is signed and dated in correspondence with the year 1174.² The motive is two water-buffaloes with shepherd boys on their backs rushing homeward with heads bent, as the rain is beginning to pour down and the wind is shaking the old willows. Executed in a fine ink-style with slight colouring, it makes practically the same effect as some of Li T'ang's pictures of buffaloes and willow-trees, but the brush-strokes are not quite so strong and spirited as in Li T'ang's works. Two other remarkable buffalo paintings by Li Ti are the album leaves in Baron Masuda's collection known as *Hunters who Return over Snow-covered Fields*.³ The men carry their catch (a hare and a pheasant) on long poles over their shoulders; in one of the

¹ Reproduced in *Kokka*, 95, 134. *Toyo Bijutsu Taikwan*, viii. *Sogen Meigwa Shu*, pls. 14, 15, and elsewhere.

² Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. xv. The picture measures 3 ft. 7 in. by 2 ft. 2 in. and is mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

³ Reproduced in *Kokka*, 71 and 180, and in *Toyo*, viii, pls. 35-6.

pictures the hunter is tramping ahead of the animal; in the other he is seated shivering on its back. Some bare snow-laden trees give relief to the desolate landscapes. The painter has evoked the atmosphere of cold winter evenings with slight touches of white and grey tones against the brownish silk.

Closely related in style and motive to the above-mentioned pictures is a fan-shaped painting in the Boston Museum, which shows a shepherd boy in the act of mounting a large bull by grasping its horns and climbing over its head. (Pl. 46.) Some waving bamboos are growing at the cliff by the side. The picture has neither seal nor signature, but it is evidently of the period and executed in a manner which is rather like Li Ti's.

In spite of all the praise bestowed on Li Ti, some of the old critics claim that he was surpassed by Li An-chung, the other well-known specialist in bird-painting, who transplanted the Hui Tsung academy-style in Hang-chou. He made practically the same career as Li Ti and was likewise honoured with the Golden Girdle by Kao Tsung, but he does not seem to have lived as long. Li An-chung's famous quail-pictures have already been mentioned; it may be added that he also painted dogs and other animals.

Beside Li Ti and Li An-chung there was Li Tuan, who specialized in flower- and bird-painting. He had been a *tai chao* in the Hsüan-ho era (1119-1125), and like his above-mentioned colleagues he received the Golden Girdle from the Emperor Kao Tsung. Most of his pictures seem to have been fans decorated with small birds or branches of blossoming fruit-trees, but as far as I know, none of them has been identified among the relatively great number of such paintings still existing.

The most famous painters of dogs, cats, and monkeys were the two Mao; the father, Mao Sung, who became famous for his pictures of monkeys, was active in the time of the Emperor Hui Tsung, while the son, Mao I, worked in Hang-chou in the reigns of Kao Tsung and Hsiao Tsung, and became best known for pictures of puppies and kittens. He became *tai chao* in the Academy in the Ch'ien-tao era (1165-1173) and may have lived to the end of the century. His works have become much appreciated in later times; not a few of them are to be seen in China as well as in Japanese collections (cf. *Kokka*, 26, 69, 91); we are told that he was a favourite of some Japanese painters like Tosa Mitsunobu. The popularity of his works may depend to a large extent on the amusing motives—the long-haired Pekinese puppies—which are rendered with life and intimacy, but they are hardly on a level with Li Ti's or Li An-chung's works.

Simpler than these puppy pictures by Mao I, though certainly not inferior as a work of art, is the painting of a walking dog in the Boston Museum, which used to be ascribed to the painter. (Pl. 47.) Okakura has expressed his opinion about it (in the manuscript catalogue) as follows: "The certificates of Yasunobu and Yoboku attribute it to Mao I, the celebrated painter of animals in the Sung dynasty. The style is that of the Southern Sung and like Mao I, or rather his father Mao Sung; but the technique and silk mark it as a Yüan work. Very

important." From a stylistic point of view it may thus be considered as a representative of the art of the Mao family. In spite of its utter simplicity, it possesses character and an atmosphere of pictorial life.

In spite of all their individual features and specialities, the above-mentioned painters followed—each in his special field—the earlier Academy traditions and formed, so to say, supporting pillars for the new institution in Hang-chou. But they were not the only members of the Academy; there were a number of other prominent men at the same time, whose artistic importance may have been equally great, though their works were of a more independent type, more detached from the general current of stylistic evolution. They may, however, have contributed to prepare the way for the new stylistic ideals of the younger generation which became manifest towards the end of the twelfth century. Few works by them have survived, but as the lives of some of them are extensively recorded, they should not be entirely omitted.

Chiang Ts'an, *tzü*, Kuan-tao, from Chekiang, was a sickly man who looked very thin and emaciated. His great passion was tea-drinking. His favourites among the old masters were Tung Yüan and Chü-jan, and he is said to have surpassed them by the spontaneous ease and freedom of his brush-work. According to Têng Ch'un, Chü-jan learned the "hemp-fibre wrinkles" from Tung Yüan, and Chiang Ts'an learned from Chü-jan the "wrinkles like nails picked from the mud" (*ni li pa ting ts'un*). When the Emperor Kao Tsung heard about this remarkable artist, he was brought to the capital and lodged in the palace; but the strain of this official recognition seems to have been too much for the languid man: He died the night after his audience with the emperor—"truly a great fortune," adds his biographer.

Among his pictures are mentioned several important landscapes, such as *Bubbling Wells among Strange Rocks*, *A River Scene*, *The Hundred Bulls*, and others, all painted in a fluent style with a light brush. The manner may be observed in a fan-painting in the Boston Museum, traditionally ascribed to the master and certainly a work of the period. The motive is a Mountain Ravine in light mist with a man walking over a bridge. In the modelling of the mountain may be noticed some likeness with the mountain landscapes by Chü-jan, though the tone is still more hazy and the brush-work is of a broader and softer kind. (Pl. 48.)

Another picture ascribed to the master is the scroll in the Metropolitan Museum, which represents the motive of Chiang Ts'an's famous masterpiece: *The Hundred Bulls*. (Pl. 49.) It is executed in a light and fluent manner. The moist atmosphere over the river-valley is successfully rendered with two or three tones of ink, producing a soft harmony with a silvery hue. The grazing and frolicking animals are represented with infinite variety; the artist's light and elegant touch triumphs in these figures as well as in the suggestive rendering of the trees and reeds along the shore. The whole thing is alive and apparently a spontaneous creation, not a slavish copy. But it can hardly be the same picture which is mentioned by Chang

Ch'ou, because, according to this authority, it had an autograph by the Emperor Kao Tsung and a dozen colophons by various collectors and connoisseurs, none of which correspond to the writings attached to the picture in New York.¹ It may be a somewhat reduced edition of Chiang Ts'an's famous painting, which is said to have been compellingly true and "of unsurpassable brush-work", possibly executed by some close student of his if not by himself.

A contemporary painter of a more impetuous temperament, who is reckoned among the pupils of Li T'ang, was Hsiao Chao.² The encounter between teacher and pupil may not have been entirely agreeable to the former, because it happened in the wilderness of the T'ai-hang mountains, where Hsiao Chao at the time (after the fall of K'ai-fêng in 1126) lived as a robber—since other means of a livelihood were closed to the poor painter. One day he met there a man whom he robbed, but on searching the travelling bag, he found in it only brushes and colour powder. His surprise was great as the man revealed his identity as Li T'ang, the great painter, of whose fame Hsiao Chao was well aware. They made friends and went together southward. Li T'ang, who was an old and well-trained master, found a ready pupil in the ex-robber and introduced him afterwards to the Academy in Hang-chou, where Hsiao Chao soon rose to the degree of a *tai chao*.

He became known particularly for his effective representations of tempestuous landscapes, painted somewhat in the manner of Tung Yüan, though it is said that his "wrinkles" were stronger; he used thicker ink and a heavier brush. His pictures conveyed impressions of "the tumultuous rush of splashing waves, of accumulating clouds and whirling winds". The following story is told as an illustration of his manner of working:—

A wonderful great hall—Ku-shan Liang-t'ang—had been erected on a mountain above the West Lake. It rose magnificent with walls 30 feet high above a grove of plum-trees. Emperor Kao Tsung had announced his visit to the new building the next day. The event was discussed by some courtiers, and one of them said: "The high visitor will arrive but the walls are still white." It was immediately decided that the imperial painter Hsiao Chao should be sent there to paint some landscapes. When Chao received the order, he asked to be given four gallons of wine. At sunset he went into the Ku hall; and then at every watch, when the drum was beaten, he drank one gallon, and each time a gallon was emptied, one wall was finished. Thus the painting was done, and when it was completed, Hsiao Chao was also finished and drunk. The emperor arrived, and as he walked round, he looked at the walls with surprise and admiration. He was informed that the paintings were by Hsiao, and upon that he ordered that the painter should be rewarded with gold and silk.

Hsiao's pictures possessed above all the quality of making the beholder feel as if he actually were on the famous mountains and rivers, and not simply looking at pictures.

Hsiao Chao's name has been attached to various pictures, but I do not know any that could be reasonably considered as an authentic work of his. His famous pictures of the *Twelve Auspicious Omens* at the beginning of Kao Tsung's reign (in six

¹ *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. 10, ll. 34-36.

² Extensive records about Hsiao Chao are found in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*.

scrolls) have disappeared without a trace, and the same seems to be true of all the other paintings mentioned by the old biographers. A landscape scroll with his signature and the date 1134 in the collection of Mr. Fang-jo may reproduce a composition of his, but does not look like an original of the Sung period.¹ One may, however, particularly note in this picture the linear stylization of the rushing water. A somewhat similar treatment of the water that pours out of a ravine may be seen in a small fan-shaped picture in the Boston Museum. It is called *A Waterfall among Pine-clad Rocks* and was sometimes ascribed to Tung Yüan, but is now classified as probably later. (Pl. 50.) This is, no doubt, correct, but the picture may still be of the Sung period. A definite attribution is not possible, as we have no safe point of departure, but Hsiao Chao may well have made such an impetuous waterfall. Among his recorded paintings may be noted a fan with *Pines at a Gulley in the Clear Shade*, a title which also could serve for the picture in Boston. Whoever painted it, the picture is an interesting example of the bolder type of monochrome landscape painting which Hsiao Chao in particular represented in Hang-chou.

Yen Tz'ü-p'ing is also counted among the followers of Li T'ang, though he may have been too young to receive personal instruction from the old master. He was the third son of Yen Chung, one of the old members of Hui Tsung's Academy who, like most of his colleagues, re-established himself in K'ai-fêng, together with his three sons Tz'ü-an, Tz'ü-yü, and Tz'ü-p'ing, and earned a great reputation (and the Golden Girdle) through his pictures of water-buffaloes. The sons painted mostly similar motives—landscapes with herding buffaloes—and the best of the three was Tz'ü-p'ing. He entered the Academy in the Lung-hsing era (1163–1164); became a few years later a *chih hou* (the degree below *tai chao*) and received the Golden Girdle. One of his most important works, representing *Mountains in Snow*, was signed and dated in correspondence with the year 1181. His brush- and ink-manner is said to have been very like Li T'ang's, except in the "wrinkles of the stones and cliffs" which he made in a different way.

This may also be observed in a large signed landscape by Yen Tz'ü-p'ing in the Palace Museum in Peking, known under the title *Ssü Yüeh* (The Four Pleasures or Contentments).² The figures which illustrate such various occupations as fishing and *ch'in*-playing are, however, quite small and almost lost in the huge scenery of mountains, trees, water, and pavilions, which is composed in a fashion that no longer can be called quite traditional. (Pl. 51.) The overhanging mountain silhouette is of a rather new type; the forms are not bulging but compressed, conveying the impression of dry parchment or leather. The very fine leafy trees in the foreground are painted more or less as in the works of Li T'ang with a soft

¹ Reproduced in the *Tokyo Exhibition Catalogue*, pl. 60. A beautiful little picture representing *Small Birds on a Willow in Snow* is reproduced under Hsiao Chao's name in *Chung-kuo Ming Hua Chi*, but it does not give the impression of a work of the Sung period.

² The picture is executed in ink with slight colouring, and measures 6 ft. 2 in. by 3 ft. 4 in. Cf. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. 13.

and light brush. It may not be a work of the highest class, but it bears witness to remarkable skill and technical refinement.

Another large work by Yen Tz'ü-p'ing is the *Landscape with Water-buffaloes* in Viscount Akimoto's collection, which both by its motive and design shows a close dependence on Li T'ang. Here are no mountains, only a low river bank with some old trees, placed at one side of the picture, as becomes the fashion in the South Sung period. The buffalo cow is sleeping with its head on the calf, while the shepherds are amusing themselves under the trees—a bucolic scene that still may be seen in the country around the lower Yang-tzū river.¹

Another well-recorded landscape painter who may be mentioned here, as a picture with his signature is preserved in Boston, is Chu Jui. He was a native of Hopei (Chihli), but worked at the Academy, where he became a *tai chao* before the end of the Shao-hsing period (1131–1162) and was also granted the Golden Girdle.² The Emperor Ning Tsung's mother is said to have written poems on some of his pictures. Chu Jui seems to have retained a preference for the scenery of the northern province from where he came. He painted snow landscapes, *Hunters in Snow*, *Travelling by Mule Carts*, *Feeding Horses in the Snow*, and so on. Tung Ch'ich'ang said about one of his pictures, representing *A Visit to the T'ai Mountains*, that it was so good that even Li T'ang could not dream of making anything equal to it.

The picture in Boston represents *Bullock Carts Travelling over a Mountain Path*. (Pl. 52.) The signature does not seem to be contemporary with the picture, but this is evidently of the epoch and corresponds well with what we are told about the master's art. It is no longer in the best state of preservation, but what remains is interesting, and convincing also from an illustrative point of view. The big carts, drawn by bullocks and mules up the steep mountain road, are exactly the same as may still be seen in the northern provinces, and the scene by the inn, where the transports are resting, contains vivid reflections of Chinese country life. The mountains may also have been suggested by natural scenery, although freely treated and arranged to suit the steep and narrow design. The execution is old-fashioned and very refined, particularly in the trees and the figures, but the mountains are painted with a somewhat softer and broader brush. The worn condition of the painting should not prevent us from recognizing its great artistic qualities.

(3) *The Ma-Hsia School of Landscape Painting*

The new ideals of monochrome landscape painting, which more than any other form of painting have made the art of the Southern Sung period known and admired in the Western world and in Japan, became manifest during the last quarter of the twelfth century. Their greatest protagonists were Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei who, each in his way, gave the final formulation to these gradually

¹ Reproduced in colour in *Kokka* nr. 200.

² Cf. *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*.

growing ideals of style. They created a type of landscape painting which, in spite of much opposition, held its own not only in the Sung but also in the Ming period, though there was no later painter equal to these in strength of brush-work and quality of design.

It is, however, a curious fact that their traditional recognition in China is not as great as their appreciation in Japan and elsewhere. The most influential art-critics of the Ming period placed them in the so-called Northern School in contradistinction to the painters of the Southern School, whom they considered as superior artists and precursors of the *Wên jên hua*, the Literary Men's painting, which was then the ideal of the scholars and writers. This retrospective classification, which was mainly a repercussion of later artistic movements, implied a certain amount of depreciation of the painters who were not placed in the Southern School. Their activities were not so extensively recorded and their works not so ardently collected as those of certain other painters, and it became easy for Japanese artists and collectors, who at that time had recognized the greatness of Ma Yüan's and Hsia Kuei's art, to obtain many of their best works. It thus happens that to-day we find more paintings attributed to Ma Yüan, Hsia Kuei, and their closest followers, in Japanese and American collections than in China, and that the literary records about these masters are not as abundant as those concerning many minor men.

Ma Yüan was the most perfect product of a family of painters which had been active during several generations. The earliest fully recorded representative of this family was Ma Fên (whose art was discussed in the preceding chapter); his ancestors are said to have been painters of Buddhist subjects, but he was probably the first of the Ma who excelled in monochrome ink-painting and sought his motives in nature. His son was Ma Hsing-tzŭ, who followed in the footsteps of the father, specializing likewise in birds and animals. He reached the degree of *tai chao* in Kao Tsung's Academy, and is said to have been much esteemed by the emperor, who consulted him on the pictures which were acquired for the imperial collection. But, as far as I know, none of his works have survived.

Ma Hsing-tzŭ had two sons, Ma Kung-hsien and Ma Shih-jung, who both became *tai chao* in the Academy and received the distinction of the Golden Girdle. They painted flowers, birds, figures, and landscapes, preferably in monochrome ink, and were active about the middle of the twelfth century (up to 1160 or a little later). The style of Ma Kung-hsien may still be observed in a well-known picture belonging to Nanzenji in Kyoto, which bears his signature. It represents the *Discussion between the Hermit Yüeh Shan and the Philosopher Li Ao* (of the T'ang period), but its main artistic motive is a tall pine-tree, growing along the side of the composition and stretching its jerky branches right across it. (Pl. 53.) The design is of the same type as may be seen in many of Ma Yüan's pictures, though emptier, more matter-of-fact and without their power of poetic suggestion.

Ma Shih-jung's paintings have not survived, and he is thus mainly known as the father of the two great painters Ma K'uei and Ma Yüan, who represented the

fourth generation of the Ma family, while the fifth and last generation was represented by Ma Yüan's son Ma Lin.

The two brothers must have been closely associated as painters; they were both born about the middle of the twelfth century, and continued their activity until about 1224. Ma K'uei was the older but less gifted of the two; the paintings which are ascribed to him are mostly diluted editions of the brother's works; yet, there are one or two very remarkable things among them, landscapes of deep poetic inspiration, though we are told that Ma K'uei reached his greatest fame as a painter of birds. The best known specimens are all in Japan, brought over as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (like those of Ma Yüan), for instance, the two tall compositions of *Pine-trees and Rocks* in Count Tokugawa's collection (*Kokka*, 196) and *Lin Ho-ching admiring the Plum-blossoms* in Baron Iwasaki's collection (*Toyo*, viii, pl. 40), and furthermore, the landscape in Chishakuin at Daitokuji in Kyoto (*Kokka*, 236), which, however, looks like a later creation in the manner of Hsia Kuei. The most intimate and suggestive of all the pictures ascribed to Ma K'uei is the fan-shaped painting, belonging to Mr. Magoshi Kyohei in Tokyo, representing *Two Men in a Boat on an Evening Lake*.¹ It is one of those exquisitely simple compositions where the painter with the greatest economy of means has suggested something beyond definition—a reflection of infinity, an echo of the deep harmony between man and nature which only true poetry, in words or symbols of painting, may convey. There is little to be described or analysed in a picture like this: a projecting stone, a few reeds, a boat with two men, and the faint silhouette of mountain tops in the misty background. It consists mostly of the empty silk ground, but it is nevertheless full of significance, an unfathomable source of peace and beauty. (Pl. 54.) If Ma K'uei actually painted this, as claimed by tradition, he must have been a poet hardly inferior to his more famous brother.

Ma Yüan, *hao*, Ch'in-shan, became a *tai chao* in the Academy during the reign of the Emperor Kuang Tsung (1190–1194), and stood in great favour at court in the time of the Emperor Ning Tsung, who conferred on him as well as on his brother the Golden Girdle. The emperor's sister-in-law, who, like the emperor himself, was a prominent calligraphist, was particularly fond of Ma Yüan's pictures, and used to provide them with poetic inscriptions. He was still active in the reign of the Emperor Li Tsung (1225–1264), when he executed a picture of the *Three Religious*, but it seems probable that he died before the middle of the century. His artistic education was, no doubt, a matter of family tradition, but he is said to have followed Li T'ang most closely.

The old historians are all unanimous in praising the strength of his brush-work and in characterizing his designs as angular and unilateral, or what they call "side-horned".² One of them writes:—

¹ Reproduced: *Toyo*, viii, pl. 41. *Catalogue of Tokyo Exhib.* (1928), pl. 91, and elsewhere.

² The biographical notes *re* Ma Yüan are collected in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*, but some additional descriptions of his works are found in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*.

"His brush-manner was severe and regular (i.e. firm). He used burnt ink in painting trees and rocks. The branches and leaves he painted with a compressed (squeezed) brush; the rocks he made sharp and angular with wrinkles like the scares of a big axe, using diluted ink for these parts. Complete views by him are not common; in his small pictures the tops of the high mountains are not visible and the steep cliffs reach right down, so that their bases are not seen. The near mountains touch the sky, but the distant mountains are low. He painted the single boat with a lonely man rowing on the moon-lit sea. Such were his (unilateral) 'side-horned' sceneries."

The same characterization is repeated with slight variations by other chroniclers, but in addition to this some of them also offer remarks about his figures, buildings, and trees:—

"Ma Yüan painted his figures dignified and reposeful. For buildings he used a foot-measure, painting them with colour very fine and clear."

Or:—

"Ma Yüan's trees were always slanting obliquely or crooked and tortuous; gardeners who make trees grow in such a way are still called Ma Yüan."

Or:—

"Ma Yüan made his pine-trees very tall and strong like iron. Sometimes he painted them with a stump brush; they have an old spirit and are very beautiful and elegant."

Several important pictures illustrative of the above-mentioned features are described by the old critics, but it seems hardly necessary for us to dwell on those which have not been identified; we may at once turn to the works by Ma Yüan which can still be seen. Several of these pictures (in Peking and Boston) are provided with apparently authentic signatures; in other cases the attributions are supported by historical tradition, which may be followed at least to the fourteenth century (as in the case of some fine pictures in Japan), and it must be admitted that they all bear the imprint of an individual style which has always been considered characteristic of Ma Yüan. But as none of them is dated, it is hardly possible to reach a definite idea about the stylistic evolution within the work of the master. The simplest way to group them seems to be with regard to the character of the designs.

The compositional arrangement which is most common in Ma Yüan's works is the above-mentioned unilateral design, built up by steep cliffs and tall trees, which rise at the one side of the picture and project some sections or branches across the otherwise empty space. Famous examples of such designs are the large pictures in Count Tanaka's and Marquis Kuroda's collections. The former represents a philosopher (accompanied by his servant) seated at a stone table under a huge pine, which grows along the side of the composition and sends out a branch diagonally across the narrow field.¹ In the other, which is known as *A Moon-lit Night*,² the composition consists of an overhanging cliff, rising along the left side, from which a gnarled pine reaches out like a giant arm under the moon. (Pl. 55.) The old man who sits on the terrace turns slightly towards the background gazing at the moon:

¹ Reproduced in *Kokka*, 202. *Toyo*, viii, pl. 43.

² Reproduced in *Kokka*, 160. *Toyo*, viii, pl. 44. *Shimbi Taikwan*, viii, and elsewhere.

a small circular orb which in its loneliness serves to accentuate the wide, empty space. In the opposite corner stands the little servant of the old man. The figure is here, as in so many of Ma Yüan's pictures, the epitome of the whole motive, representing, as it were, the mind of the painter from which the vision is reflected. It gives an introspective touch to the whole representation, and the picture seems to gain a significance which reaches beyond that of the decorative design and the tonal values. The artist suggests infinity not only by utilizing empty space as a most potent factor in the composition, but also as a reflection in the soul of man. The two elements of the conception—man and nature—are completely fused into a harmonious unity.

Similar designs may be observed in two minor pictures in the Palace Museum in Peking. The one represents some white egrets on the shore under an overhanging cliff from which a tortuous tree is growing out in horizontal curves.¹ The contour of a steep cliff gives relief to the background, but its top is cut off. A light cover of white snow accentuates the contrast of the bold ink-lines. The very effective picture is provided with Ma Yüan's signature.

The other picture is a horizontal composition.² Two large pines are growing on the terrace, bending diagonally and spreading their angular branches far over the empty space beyond. At the opposite end of the picture rises a straight vertical rock; the middle section between these lofty side-wings is quite blank—bare silk—something undefined and unlimited. The two men on the terrace are looking out into the great space, as if they were seeking to realize their indissoluble unity with infinity. The picture is not signed, but provided with an old label with Ma Yüan's name and seems very characteristic of his style.

Somewhat similar to this, though not so strong and convincing in the brush-work, is the small picture belonging to Mr. Magoshi Kyohei.³ It represents a man standing on a mountain terrace under a large pine which sends its strong zig-zag branches beyond the edge of the terrace. The motive returns in a somewhat simplified form in a picture in private possession in China, in which the man is shown seated on a cliff under a pine-branch.⁴ In the Boston Museum there are two fan-shaped pictures which again repeat the motive with certain variations.⁵ In the more important of these two pictures which bears Ma Yüan's signature, the human motive is doubled: The sage under the branch of the far-spreading old plum-tree receives a visitor; but no words are spoken. The two men remain reverently at some distance from each other, seated in contemplation, listening to the silent message of the plum-blossoms.

Among the more centralized or "complete" landscape compositions by Ma Yüan should be mentioned the large picture in Baron Iwasaki's collection, where

¹ Reproduced in *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. ix; on silk; size: 1 ft. 7 in. by 1 ft. 1 in.

² Reproduced in *Ku Kung*, vol. vi; on paper; size: 2 ft. 4 in. by 3 ft. 9 in.

³ Reproduced in *Kokka*, 147. *Toyo*, viii, pl. 46.

⁴ A poor reproduction of the picture in *Chung-kuo Ming Hua Chi*.

⁵ *Chinese Paintings in American Collections*, pls. 42, 90.

the steep towering mountains fill the middle part of the background and a cluster of leafy trees growing at the cliffs forms the central motive of the foreground.¹ The wind is shaking the trees which bend over the promontory where a boat is moored; a man with a large paper-umbrella is hastening along the mountain path towards houses, which lie half-hidden in the mist at the foot of a precipice. The design is centralized, but towards the right side it floats out into the misty space where all forms disappear.

A still more definitely centralized design is the large picture in the Palace Museum which represents a *Mountain and Tall Pines in Snow*. (Pl. 56.) The whole background consists of precipitous mountains, which raise their sharply silhouetted white peaks through the heavy mist, reaching the upper edge of the picture, where some of them are cut off. At their base, on the terrace, are some very fine pavilions (executed most carefully with ruler and foot-measure), partly hidden by the leafy maples, while the two pines rise far above them, vying with the mountains in height. Their trunks are immensely tall and slender, winding "like bent iron", and their characteristically angular and jerky branches form an intricate criss-cross pattern in front of the white mist and mountains. The daring exaggerations in the design, the spirited virtuosity of the brush-work, the striking contrasts of black and white (with some addition of colour) make it a most impressive example of the Ma landscape style. It has evidently always been a picture of great fame; it is fully signed, provided with five imperial seals and recorded in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*,² though it can hardly be regarded as one of the most convincing or satisfying pictures that bear the name of Ma Yüan.³

More appealing than such *bravura* pieces are, however, some of Ma Yüan's smaller pictures in which nothing of the inspiring mood or vision is sacrificed to the decorative design. There is the *Early Spring Landscape* with the bare willows in the Boston Museum (also signed) (Pl. 57): A mountain range in the background; at its foot a village hidden in the mist. A stretch of water spanned by a bridge, and closest to the foreground two old willows with slender plummy branches quivering like tendrils. The atmosphere is suggested by gradations of tone. There is a breath of morning wind touching the tops of the willows; the mist is slowly dissolving—otherwise no movement, no sound. The spring is still hesitating.

In some other of these small pictures the mood of nature is concentrated in a human figure, as for instance, the Old Fisherman who has fallen asleep in his boat among the reeds, which bend over him protectingly—a famous picture in the Palace Museum, provided with eight imperial seals and a poem by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung⁴; or the Lady Ling-chao⁵ who is standing shivering in the cold—a most

¹ Reproduced in *Kokka*, 234. *Toyo*, viii, pl. 42, *Shimbi Taikwan*, xi, and elsewhere.

² Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. viii; on paper; size: 7 ft. 9 in. by 3 ft. 1 in.

³ Ma Yüan's four pictures, representing the Four Seasons, in Count Sakai's collection may also be mentioned in this group.

⁴ Reproduced in *Ku Kung*, vol. xi; on paper; size: 1 ft. 1 in. by 9 in.

⁵ A Buddhist mystic of the T'ang period.

appealing figure on an album leaf in Boston. (Pl. 58.) The atmosphere is grey, the river-bank covered with snow; the willow branches are bare, and the few leaves which still remain on the shrubs are crumpling. As she stands there, quite isolated in the bleak surroundings, she makes us realize that the outward world exists only for the experience of the soul.

But the last word of æsthetic economy, atmosphere, and silence was given by Ma Yüan in the famous picture representing *An Angler on a Wintry Lake*, now in the collection of Baron Mitsui.¹ (Pl. 59.) The flat-bottomed sampan is just large enough to carry the man who sits in its stern, bent over the angling rod. Some faint wavy lines along its side indicate the water. That is all. The rest of the picture is emptiness—a silent grey tone as of the evening mist. Motives like this may still be observed on the West Lake in Hang-chou; but seldom, if ever, did an artist grasp so much of their significance in so few strokes of the brush. Never was emptiness made more eloquent, or silence more palpable in a picture.

In addition to the landscapes with figures there are also among Ma Yüan's works examples of real boundary-painting representing terraces and pavilions mostly seen from above and carefully delineated in every detail, so that they almost might serve as models for architects. *A Feast of Lanterns* in the Palace Museum in Peking should be remembered in this connection, and also the album leaf in the Boston Museum, which represents a series of terraces or balustraded platforms rising in successive steps to form a vantage point, from where the surrounding mountains may be admired. The whole thing is lifted high up in the air; it is as if the painter would carry us to the edge of the sky or the borderland of infinity. (Pl. 60.)

No attempts to describe Ma Yüan's pictures will do justice to them. They reflect ideas that reverberate beyond forms and dissolve into space. There may have been greater painters in China, but no one who with a few strokes of the brush transformed more completely shapes of nature into symbols of unseen reality.

It is evident that Ma Yüan's very striking mode of composition and his decisive brush-manner induced many later painters, not only in his own time but also of the Yüan and Ming periods, to imitations. There are many well-known pictures passing under the master's name which belong to this class, for instance: *Two Dhyana Priests* standing under the branch of a pine-tree in the Tenryuji (temple) in Kyoto (*Kokka*, 123); the landscape with a man in a boat, belonging to Marquis Kuroda (*Shimbi Taikwan*, xx); a minor landscape in the Ryukoin (temple) in Kyoto, and others. The master's name has always been one of the most admired and coveted in Japan. A somewhat later imitation after Ma Yüan is the famous scroll in the Freer Gallery, formerly considered one of his great masterpieces, but now classified as a work of the Ming period.² The composition is grand and poetic, quite in the

¹ Reproduced in *Kokka*, 23. *Toyo*, viii, pl. 46. *Shimbi Taikwan*, xiii, and elsewhere. Another picture probably by the master is *Bamboos with Swallows* in the collection of Marquis Asano at Hiroshima. *Kokka*, 397.

² Cf. *Chinese Paintings in American Collection*, pls. 134-6, and Binyon, *Ma Yüan's Landscape Roll* in the Freer Collection. New York, privately printed, 1916.

master's vein, but the poetry that belongs to the conception is destroyed by skilful phraseology, a fault that spoils too many of the so-called Ma Yüans executed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

More artistic interest is offered by the works of Ma Yüan's son Ma Lin, who also became a prominent member of the Academy and reached the degree of *chih hou* (below *tai chao*). He was evidently a very able painter, and we are told that the father employed him extensively as a collaborator. But he did not possess the great creative spirit of the father, and he seems to have reverted in part to the earlier family tradition of flower- and bird-painting. Very beautiful examples of Ma Lin's faculty in this respect are two pictures in the Palace Museum in Peking, representing respectively *Two Branches of a Blossoming Plum-tree* and *Quails under a Tree in Snow*,¹ two sensitive interpretations of these often-repeated motives, particularly the former, which consists simply of two very slender branches shooting in from the edge on an otherwise empty background of white silk. Truly, a lyric poem in a few strokes of the brush.

The same sensitiveness may be observed in Ma Lin's famous *Evening Landscape* in Mr. Nezu's collection, which is provided with an imperial autograph and a seal of the year 1254.² It is a transparently light and sketchy picture, in which the cliffs at the shore emerge only in part from the dense mist, and the swallows which circle over the water carry the imagination far into the limitless expanse. (Pl. 62.) Somewhat more like his father's compositions is the album leaf in the Boston Museum representing *A Rocky Beach* and some large trees (maples?) on the promontory, which are dipping their leaves in the water. (Pl. 61.) The design is unilateral, like so many of Ma Yüan's, but not so strong or concentrated in a decorative sense. Ma Lin's larger pictures become easily too crowded and detailed; he does not possess the power by which everything is brought down within the lines of a great decorative conception, but the details and minor motives are often very beautiful. His *High Terraced Mountains with Travellers* in the Palace Museum in Peking is quite important of its kind, though far more traditional and finicky than any of Ma Yüan's mountain scenery.³ More poetic and suggestive of definite moods of nature are the two landscapes, *Summer* and *Winter*, in Baron Iwasaki's collection, which probably formed part of a series representing the four seasons.

Like his father Ma Lin was also skilled in boundary-painting, done with ruler and foot-measure. An example of this is the picture in the Musée Guimet representing the *Terrace of the Immortals* which is provided with Ma Lin's signature, but executed in a rather heavy style which clearly marks it as a copy. The design illustrates, however, a particular side of his artistic activity.

Ma Lin, just as well as Ma Yüan, was not exclusively a landscape painter; both

¹ Reproduced in *Ku Kung Ming Hua Chi*, vol. xi, pls. 1 and 2.

² Reproduced in *Gumpo Seigwan*, 2, and in *Sogen Meigwa Shu*, pl. 23.

³ Reproduced in *Ku Kung Ming Hua Chi*, vol. viii, silk; size: 4 ft. 6 in. by 1 ft. 9 in., mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

painted legendary figures and Taoist and Buddhist subjects besides their landscapes, but while none of those which are ascribed to the elder Ma can be accepted as his own work, there are some interesting figure paintings, which may be originals by Ma Lin.¹ They indicate that Ma Lin must have stood in close contact with the school of Ch'an (Dhyana) painters, which about the middle of the thirteenth century had become the most important artistic movement in Hang-chou.

Hsia Kuei, *tzü*, Yü-yü, from Ch'ien-t'ang (Chekiang), was practically contemporary with Ma Yüan, his competitor in the Academy. The two men followed the same ideals of style; Hsia Kuei may have been the greater painter, the stronger man of the brush, but he was hardly superior to Ma Yüan as a poet. No exact dates as to his life and work have been transmitted, except that he worked during the Emperor Ning Tsung's reign (1195-1224). It was probably quite at the beginning of this period that he became a *tai chao* and received the Golden Girdle. He is said to have followed in the footsteps of Li T'ang, who was generally considered the best model, but he also studied the earlier landscape painters: Fan K'uan for snow-scenes, Wang Hsia, Tung Yüan, and Mi Fei for their superior brush-work, and he gradually reached the highest perfection in the handling of the brush and ink.

The characterizations of his works offered by the old critics are fairly uniform; they all insist on the strong pictorial qualities of his works, his way of using the ink in a colouristic fashion:—

“Hsia Kuei painted figures and landscapes with fermented ink, beautifully as if they were coloured. His brush-manner exhibited great skill and his ink was applied in drops.”

Or:—

“Hsia Kuei painted the tops of the trees with a compressed (squeezed) brush and gave them dry buds. The branches and leaves of the trees he made likewise with the compressed brush, but the faces and eyes of the figures he put in with dots; the folds of the garments and the twigs of the willows were often done in a broken and sketchy fashion. He did not use ruler and foot-measure for the high buildings and pavilions, but drew them with a free hand. His brush-work was very fine and close, startling and impetuous; he possessed great spirit-harmony (*ch'i yün*). Therefore he became one of the most famous men of the age.”²

Another critic writes:—

“The designs and wrinkles of Hsia Kuei's landscapes were like those of Ma Yüan's works, but his conceptions were of a more ancient kind, very simple and clear. He often used a stump brush, but the trees and leaves he painted with a compressed brush, the buildings without any foot-measure.” etc.³

In some of the colophons on Hsia Kuei's pictures written by later men,⁴ it is emphasized that the painter laid on his ink in heavy drops, like starting rain, and

¹ Among his religious pictures may be mentioned: *The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* in Myoshinji, Kyoto. *A Landscape with Ch'an Priests* in the former Akaboshi collection. *The Taoist Patriarchs*, Han Shan and Shih Tè, in the collection of Mr. Suenobu, an ink-painting in pure Ch'an-style.

² *Shan Shui Chia Fa* quoted in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*.

³ *Ko Ku Tao Lun* quoted in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*.

⁴ Quoted in the last-named book and in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*.

that the effect of his ink-work was deep and brilliant like colour. In fact, he was regarded as the greatest master of the age in this respect.

Hsia Kuei's earliest works are said to have been figure-paintings, but none of them has survived; we have only landscapes by him, and they are of a fairly uniform style, though more or less impetuous or impressionistic in brush-work. It seems most probable that this quality developed more strongly with the years as the spirit and the art of the master matured. The works in which it is less apparent may be relatively earlier. Foremost among them should be mentioned the great landscape in the Palace Museum, which is known as *Looking for Plum Blossoms*.¹ (Pl. 63.) An old scholar, accompanied by a servant who carries his *ch'in*, wanders about in the mountains, where the snow still covers the ground, seeking for the earliest messengers of the spring. He arrives at the bank of a turbulent stream, and here is an old tree just beginning to shoot fresh buds. The servant points excitedly to the tree, and the old man stands in silent adoration. The mountains in the background are steep and sharp; their tops partly cut off at the upper edge, and far away in the gorge is the traditional temple. The design, particularly of the mountains and the old tree, is closely related to certain compositions by Ma Yüan, but the brush-work is somewhat bolder with stronger accents and a richer scale of tonal values than is common in Ma Yüan's paintings.

The same motive returns in a large picture in the collection of Count Akimoto in Tokyo.² The old man is here walking, followed by his servant with the *ch'in*, along the tempestuous river, over which the maple-trees are bending. The atmosphere is misty, and only the upper part of the steep mountains become visible on the right side. The brush-work is looser and more sketchy than in the previous example. (The picture may not be as early as the attribution indicates.) A finer example of this type of composition with a high mountain rising above the mist on the one side, trees at the foot of the mountain and a stretch of open water on the other side, is the large picture in the Boston Museum, which receives its name from the fishing-nets staked on the bank of the river. It is a very beautiful composition, grand, and yet with a tone of intimacy, but whether it is actually Hsia Kuei's work, as claimed by tradition, is difficult to tell.³

In order to realize the full strength and beauty of Hsia Kuei's brush-work we must turn to such famous pictures by the master as the *Ch'ang Chiang Wan Li t'u* (The River of Ten Thousand *li*) in the Palace Museum, or the almost equally important landscape scroll in the National Museum in Peking. The former is 34 ft. 8 in. long; the latter nearly 28 ft.; they are both painted on paper with pure ink and authenticated by seals and inscriptions. Chang Ch'ou says about *The River of Ten Thousand li*, that it is "a pure and bright work of brilliant style", a verdict well supported by the portion of the scroll reproduced in *Ku Kung* (vol. viii).

¹ Reproduced in *Ku Kung*, vol. xiv; on silk; size: 5 ft. 5 in. by 3 ft. 3 in. Mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*. Five Imperial Seals, but no signature.

² Reproduced in the *Catalogue of the Tokyo Exhibition*, 1928, pl. 96.

³ *Chinese Paintings in American Collection*, pl. 54.

This section represents the upper parts of some pavilions rising above the tree tops, drawn with a firm and swift brush which reflects the impetuous temperament of the painter.

The picture in the National Museum, of which we offer a series of illustrations, is hardly inferior. (Pls. 64, 65, 66.) It forms a continuous diorama of a river- and mountain-scenery where the changing motives merge into another as do the various parts of a musical composition. The atmosphere is like the ocean of tone from which the waves of melody arise to sink again harmoniously resolved: Rocky shores, mountains with pine-forests, overhanging trees, small huts shaded by shrubs, bamboo bridges connecting some promontories, and water, sometimes narrowing into straits or forming deep bays, sometimes broadening into a shoreless sea where distant sails are lost in the mist. All is rendered in tones of black ink, which glows in the deep shadows and becomes almost transparent in the light parts. The brush-strokes are sometimes short and cutting; sometimes like dashes of ink, modified according to the motives, but always reflecting the firm hand and the inspired mind. The result is an astonishingly rich and expressive symphony of black and white, where the motives appear and disappear again, suggesting the immeasurable expanse and the ceaseless change of nature. The particular advantages of the horizontal scroll composition have here been fully utilized; the picture may, indeed, be remembered as one of the most perfect examples of this type of Chinese painting.

It should also be noted that in most of Hsia Kuei's pictures the horizon is placed lower than in compositions by earlier landscape painters, a modification which makes them more like European landscapes. In fact, there are bits in some pictures by Hsia Kuei which may remind one of drawings by Rembrandt. Yet, they have no consistently maintained point of sight, no perspective construction. Like all the other Chinese landscapes which we have studied, they are made up of impressionistically conceived parts which are blended by atmospheric tone into a unity. The rocks and trees of the foreground form one motive, and the faintly indicated silhouettes of the mountains in the background another; between them the mist spreads its thick veil concealing all that might serve as a measure of distance. The sense of infinity is the dominant quality also in his works, even though the artist, more than his predecessors, dwells upon the visual beauty of objects in the foreground. From a purely pictorial point of view Hsia Kuei's works may be counted among the very best Chinese paintings that have survived, though the relative monotony of the motives and ideas is perhaps more apparent in his case than in regard to some of the other great landscape painters.

Among minor pictures which bear the imprint of the master's brush may be mentioned the fan-shaped painting in the Boston Museum, which represents *A Wind-swept Tree on a Rocky Ledge* and a returning boat on the water.¹ Mountain silhouettes appear in the distance. Although somewhat worn, the picture is alive

¹ *Chinese Paintings in American Collection*, pl. 14.

in every brush-stroke and very effective in the modulations of the ink-tones. The trees and rocks seem to be wet by rain; the atmosphere saturated with moisture. The tonal quality of the picture is rich and deep, depending on the contrasts between the masses of dark ink and the open spaces of luminous mist.

Several of his minor paintings represent leafy trees on rocky ledges or promontories which sink into a contourless sea, while sharp mountain silhouettes appear above the mist in the background, as may be seen in the famous examples in Baron Iwasaki's and Marquis Kuroda's collections (*Toyo*, viii, pls. 56, 57), and the same motive returns also frequently in his scroll compositions, of which important fragments may be seen in the collections of Marquis Asano (*Kokka*, 394) and Mr. Geijo Masao in Tokyo (*Toyo*, viii, pl. 60).

The finest example of this type among the pictures ascribed to Hsia Kuei is, however, the somewhat larger hanging scroll in the Kawasaki collection in Kobe (*Toyo*, viii, pl. 55), in which a violent rain-storm is rendered by a few decisive strokes of the brush, reflecting the vehemence and fury of the weather. (Pl. 67.) The trees are pressed down by the wind over the thatched roof of the pavilion in the mountain gorge, their branches are torn and their leaves are shattered as snowflakes in the wind. A man with a large umbrella is struggling against the storm on the pole-bridge that leads over the stream; another is crouching in the pavilion. The background is mist, except for the ridge of a high mountain on which some small trees are wafting like feathers in the storm. And all this seems to be painted almost with the speed and strength of the hurricane.

The picture is not very far removed from certain works by the Ch'an-painters who already at this time had developed their highly expressionistic ink-style.

The style of Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei was reflected in the works of several contemporary or slightly younger artists whose names are less well known, but who nevertheless have left us some pure and noble paintings. One or two of them may be recorded here with a few words which may also serve to give some idea of the general level of landscape painting in Hang-chou. In the Freer Gallery there is a very beautiful mountain landscape with a scholar's abode at the water's edge in the foreground. It is signed by Hsü Shih-ch'ang, a painter who is scantily recorded for his flower- and bird-paintings in the Chinese chronicles. The landscape shows him as a very successful painter in the Ma-Hsia style, more important than, for instance, Ma Lin. The design is not so concentrated and perfectly unified as in the great works of Ma Yüan or Hsia Kuei, but it is well balanced, and contains elements of great beauty. (Pl. 68.) And, as I have said elsewhere, there are few landscapes which give a clearer and more convincing impression of the actual brush-work of a great painter of the Southern Sung period than this remarkably well-preserved picture by Hsü Shih-ch'ang.

Another painter of considerable importance was Lou Kuan. He is sometimes mentioned as a rival of Ma Yüan, though his style seems decidedly more old-fashioned. An interesting mountain landscape, probably by the master, is in the

National Museum in Stockholm.¹ It is executed with a very firm and strong brush, and the design of the piled up mountains is boldly imaginative, but it lacks the decorative beauty and poetic suggestiveness of Ma Yüan's works.

(4) *Figure and Landscape Painters in Hang-chou and Yen-ching*

The artistic activity at the Academy in Hang-chou during the reigns of the Emperors Ning Tsung and Li Tsung was by no means controlled exclusively by the Ma-Hsia school of landscape painters. There was a host of other highly skilled artists who painted figures as well as landscapes and miscellaneous subjects, connected with the Academy. Several of them rose to the degree of *tai chao*, and a few were also honoured with the Golden Girdle. Their lives are extensively recorded, but comparatively few of their works have as yet been identified.

A famous man who, according to Chinese appreciation, certainly should not be placed below Ma Yüan, was Liu Sung-nien, also known as Liu Ch'ing-po-mên, after the Ch'ing-po gate in Hang-chou, where he had his quarters, or as Liu An-mên (Liu of the Dark gate). He was the pupil of Chang Tun-li, a less known figure-painter, but is said to have followed Chao Po-chü in particular. He became a *tai chao* in the Shao-hsi era (1190-1194) and received the Golden Girdle from the Emperor Ning Tsung, who had a great admiration for his art.² Most of his works seem to have been landscapes with large figures; the illustrative element had often an important place in his pictures as in those of Chao Po-chü. He treated many of the classical subjects of Chinese art, as for instance: *Lao-tzû Riding on a Bull out of the Han-kuan Pass*, *The Meeting on the Pien Bridge*, *The Nine Old Men on the Hsiang Mountain*, etc., and though they all contained landscape scenery, the figure-motives formed the essential part of the pictures. To this class may also be counted two of the scrolls catalogued as the works of Liu Sung-nien in the National Museum in Peking, i.e. *Barbarian Chieftains presenting Tribute to the Chinese Court* (possibly inspired by Yen Li-pên) and *The Eighteen Immortals assembled in the Jade Hall on the Isles of the Blessed*, but in spite of all the signatures, seals, and certificates with which these pictures are provided, they seemed to me more like late copies than like originals of the Sung period. The same applies also to the landscape scroll *Wan Ho Sung Fêng t'u* (Ten Thousand Ravines and Wind-swept Pines) in the same museum, which is executed in a rather crude "*ch'ing lü pai*" manner, evidently inspired by the works of Chao Po-chü.

More intimate and poetic conceptions are his pictures of lute players, known

¹ Cf. *Chinese and Japanese Sculptures and Paintings in the National Museum, Stockholm*, 1931, pl. 40.

² According to tradition, transmitted in the *Hua Shih Hui Tao* (1631) and other books, Liu Sung-nien would have painted for Emperor Ning Tsung a set of pictures illustrating Weaving and Agriculture, and it has been supposed that these were the originals for the famous set of stone engravings executed by order of Emperor K'ang Hsi. Professor Pelliot has, however, shown that this supposition lack shistorical foundation. Cf. *Mémoires concernant l'Asie Orientale*, i, 96 (1913).

through early copies, as for instance, the *T'ing ch'in t'u* (Listening to the *ch'in*), of which Mr. Ch'en Pao-ch'en in Peking possesses a good version, and the picture in the Freer Gallery, which shows the man with the *ch'in* in a mountain pavilion saluting a friend who comes to visit him, while two servants with a horse are waiting lower down on the pathway.¹ Liu Sung-nien's dependence on the earlier masters is illustrated by his picture *Lu T'ung P'eng Ch'a* (Lu T'ung Drinking Tea) in the collection of Mr. Okada in Tokyo, which is a free version of a composition by Yen Li-pên.²

But occasionally Liu Sung-nien accorded greater importance to the landscape than to the figures. This may be seen in the important picture by the master in the Palace Museum, which is called *Chêng P'ing t'u*, and represents some reconnoitring soldiers on horseback in a huge mountain landscape.³ (Pl. 69.) The soldiers are passing over the traditional bridge in the foreground and up the road that winds along the overhanging cliffs. In the foreground are some large trees, but the main part of the picture is filled by the piled-up mountains which are of the bulging cloud-like shapes that we know, for instance, from Kuo Hsi's works. The design as well as the details are quite traditional and old-fashioned, but the effect is lofty, and the figures are remarkably well harmonized with the forms of the landscape.⁴

Some of Liu Sung-nien's small pictures are pure landscapes, and they have often a fine poetic tone. In the Palace Museum in Peking there is a fan-shaped painting of a pavilion at the water's edge under old willows covered by snow,⁴ and in the Boston Museum another fan with a summer landscape (Pl. 70): A rocky promontory with old maples around a pavilion in the foreground; wide expanse of water dissolving into the mist, and on the opposite side, some projecting rocks with leafy trees and bamboos bending in the wind. Liu Sung-nien was also something of a poet when he painted these simple views of the rivers and hills around Hang-chou without adding any anecdotal stories.

Among contemporary painters of some importance who reached the *tai chao* degree in the Academy should be remembered Ch'en Chü-chung and Li Sung. The former, who entered the Academy about 1201, excelled in horse-painting beside landscapes and figures, and like so many of the secondary talents he imitated most assiduously the classic masters of the T'ang period.⁵ Han Kan was his particular ideal, and like a good many other horse-painters in China he was honoured with the epithet: "a reborn Han Kan." Li Sung started as a poor carpenter's boy; was adopted by the painter Li Ts'ung-hsün, and made a successful

¹ *Chinese Paintings in American Collection*, pl. 132.

² Cf. Dr. W. Speiser's article in *Ostasiat. Zeitschrift*, 1931, H. 6.

³ Reproduced in *Ku Kung*, vol. xx; on silk with colours; size: 4 ft. 7 in. by 2 ft. 3 in., signed.

⁴ Reproduced in *Ku Kung*, vol. vi; on silk with a poetic inscription by Ho Yüan-chu.

⁵ A picture attributed to the master, in Mr. Yamamoto's collection, representing *A Sewing Lady*, is reproduced in the *Catalogue of the Tokyo Exhibition*, pl. 48. His picture in the Palace Museum in Peking representing Princess Wen Chi's return to China was mentioned in Vol. I, p. 119.

career as a painter under the Emperors Kuang Tsung, Ning Tsung, and Li Tsung.¹ He was hardly one of the truly creative personalities but highly skilled and well trained in his art. He became particularly known for his "boundary" paintings which evidently were done in adherence to earlier models, such as Kuo Chung-shu and Chao Po-chü. A good example of this type of work by Li Sung is the picture in the Palace Museum, called *Hsien Ch'ou Tsêng Ch'ing*, Immortals Calculating the Good Luck of some inquirers. The main motive, from a decorative point of view, is the pavilion rising among vaporous clouds at the shore of the Great Jade Sea, but in the pavilion are placed a group of Immortals who seem to receive some simple inquirers, approaching on foot and on muleback. Their fortunes are told by the well-tried method of "drawing sticks", which here is performed by a small boy among the Immortals. The whole thing is an entertaining illustration of Taoist practices within the scenery of a beautiful garden.²

Li Sung seems also to have had a special inclination for seascapes, which he painted in his own original style. A famous picture of his, *Watching the Tidal Wave*, is said to be among the unpublished treasures of the ex-imperial collections in Peking. A minor but very original view of the sea is the fan-shaped painting with Li Sung's signature in the collection of Mr. Hayasaki Benkichi in Tokyo. (Pl. 71.) It represents a small boat or sampan with four men tossed about on the rolling waves as it is trying to make its way out of a rocky beach. The stylization of the surging waves in long spiral filaments is a very effective decorative device and at the same time quite suggestive of the incessant movement of the boundless watery plain.

The productiveness of the painters who lived in the Southern Sung capital should not make us forget that there were good artists also in the North, which now was under the sway of the Chin,³ the Golden Tartars, who had made of Yen-ching (Peking) a beautiful capital with a large imperial palace and many fine temples. The foremost of the Chin emperors in the twelfth century, Shih Tsung (1161-1190), was a highly cultivated and noble-minded man who, because of his wisdom and great moral qualities, was sometimes compared to such sages of old as Yao and Shun. He won the love and admiration of his Chinese subjects and did much to revive their native traditions also in the field of art and literature. Many prominent painters were attached to the court or honoured with high government charges, but their works seem to have perished with very few exceptions during

¹ Li Sung is often mentioned as the master of a series of pictures (in one or two scrolls) illustrating Agriculture: *Fu T'ien t'u*. The notice is found already in one of Chang Ch'ou's works (beginning of seventeenth century) and Ferguson (op. cit., p. 134) claims to have seen three of these pictures by Li Sung. According to Professor Pelliot, the so-called *Fu T'ien t'u* would have been a series of copies after some of the compositions included in *K'eng Chih t'u* and not original works by Li Sung. Cf. *Mémoires concernant l'Asie Orientale*, P. Pelliot, *A Propos du K'eng Tche T'ou*, Paris, 1913.

² Reproduced in *Ku Kung*, vol. xii; on silk with colours; size 5 ft. 4 in. by 3 ft. 3 in. Mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

³ Some fifty painters active under the Chin government in the North are mentioned in *P'ei Wên Chai Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 52.

the Mongol inroads, which led to the capture and complete destruction of Yen-ching already in 1215, and to the capture of K'ai-fêng, the second Chin capital, in 1233.

Several of the artists who worked under the Chin treated preferably subjects which enjoyed much popularity also in the Yüan and early Ming periods, i.e. horses, Tartar riders and hunters, and it seems quite possible that some paintings of this type, which usually are called "Chao Mêng-fu", are actually copies of or derivations from the works by Chin painters, who may have had more reasons than Chao Mêng-fu to glorify the Tartar huntsmen. Well known among such compositions is the one which represents a rider on a briskly trotting horse seen in profile. (An early version of this belonged to Sir William van Horne in Montreal.) Other variations on the motive, with more Chinese looking personages, may be seen in M. Stoclet's collection, as for instance the rather worn but very refined picture of a man on horseback followed by a page and a porter on foot. (Reproduced in *Ars Asiatica*, i, pl. 22.)

Among the most famous horse-painters of the Chin dynasty are mentioned Yang Pang-chi and Li Tsao. The former, whose *tzŭ* was Tê-mou, came from Hua-yin in Shensi and was active at Yen-ching in the Ta-ting era (1161-1190). He reached high official positions, served on the Board of Ceremonies, and was finally created a duke. His writings were esteemed equal to his paintings, which are said to have been in old-fashioned style, the landscapes reminiscent of Li Ch'êng's, the horse-paintings of Han Kan's works. In the colophon on one of his pictures he was called "a second Han Kan, a reborn Ts'ao Pa, who painted ten thousand horses. A thousand gold coins did not equal his works. He painted the emperor's musk-deer piebald horse flying over the paper like a heavenly dragon".¹ Surely, an artist like Yang Pang-chi must have exercised considerable influence within his special domain.²

Li Tsao was somewhat younger, active in the Ming-ch'ang era (1190-1196); and his figure and horse paintings are said to have been in the style of Li Lung-mien. This characterization may bring to our mind several horse paintings, which show more or less similarity with Li Lung-mien's works, as for instance, the album leaf in the Boston Museum representing *A Man trying to catch a Horse*, which is executed in pure ink in the *pai miao* style and provided with an inscription in large characters: "Brush of Hao Ch'êng. 1107. Imperial autograph," but as it hardly can be as early, the inscription is most likely a later addition.³

¹ *Shu Hua P'u*, vols. 36 and 52.

² Ferguson (op. cit., p. 136) mentions a picture of a Barbarian Horseman signed by Yang Pang-chi, but gives no information about the owner of the picture. He says that "in its intensity of action this picture may be compared to the *Horse and Rider* by Albert Cuyp in the Munich Gallery", but the said picture by Cuyp represents an Officer on a Horse standing quite still.

³ *Chinese Paintings in American Collection*, pl. 55. This is an exceptionally fine picture by a horse-painter of rather early type. Hao Ch'êng, *tzŭ*, Ch'ang-yüan, from Chü-jung in Kiangsu, is mentioned in *Hsüan-ho Hua P'u* before Li Lung-mien, and in *Shu Hua P'u* before Kuo Hsi. He seems to have been active in the latter part of the

Another very fine picture in the same museum, which should be remembered in this connection, is the album leaf representing Princess Wen Chi returning from Mongolia with her two children and a companion. (Pl. 72.) It is evidently the work of a great horse-painter; the animals are more interesting than the figures. The old attribution of this picture to Ku Tê-chien of the T'ang period cannot be taken very seriously. It is now marked "probably a late Sung or Yüan painting", and may well serve to illustrate the type of horse-painting which flourished under the Chins.

The best known of all the painters classified under the Chin dynasty is, however, Li Shan from P'ing-yang in Shansi, active at the beginning of the thirteenth century. He was a high-class landscape painter, and has become famous particularly through a short horizontal scroll representing *Pines and Firs in Wind and Snow*, which, according to Dr. Ferguson, is now in the collection of Mrs. Eugène Meyer, jun. The picture is described in *Mo Yüan Hui Kuan*, where it is said, that "the trees, stones, and water are painted in a very easy manner, yet, there is a definite order in the vertical and horizontal strokes". Several well-known connoisseurs wrote colophons on the picture and extolled it as one of the finest things they had ever seen.

A large and very important landscape attributed to the same artist is in the Freer Gallery. It bears the painter's signature and "may well be by him", as remarked in the catalogue by Mr. Lodge. Unfortunately, the picture is considerably damaged by mildew, and retouched, but it retains nevertheless the atmosphere of a great romantic landscape and the imprint of a good master's brush. (Pl. 73.) It is rich and deep in tone, quite coloristic wherever the original ink is preserved. The silk is of a very fine texture and so brittle that it seems to be peeling off continuously. The tall pines in the foreground form a strong contrast of vertical lines against the ceaselessly curving and jostling forms of the projecting cliffs, and the bare trees on the mountain terraces are stretching their branches with avidity towards the cold winter sky. It may, indeed, be said of this, as of Li Shan's above-mentioned picture, that "its effect is very pure and beyond the order of common things".

(5) *The Ch'an Painters*

The last word of Southern Sung landscape painting was, however, not pronounced by any of the afore-mentioned academicians, but by painters who mostly lived as monks in one or two of the Ch'an temples in the hills above the Western Lake. Here flourished in the thirteenth century a school of landscape painting inspired by meditative Buddhism, which attained extraordinary significance in

eleventh century. He painted portraits, Buddhist and Taoist figures and also horses, and he is praised for his good colouring. His pictures in the imperial collection represented stellar divinities, spirits and fairies, but also figures with horses and pasturing horses. The attribution of the above-mentioned picture may thus have some reason, though the execution seems later and the imperial autograph hardly authentic.

expressing fleeting visions of nature. Without being religious in the traditional and formal meaning of the word, it was the expression for a special form of religious practice, and if its adherents were not all ordained priests or monks, they were at least inspired by the same religious tenets. Thus, it seems doubtful whether Liang Ka'i actually became a monk like Mu-ch'i, Ying-yü-chien, and several others of these Ch'an painters, but he left the Academy and (in his later years) chose the company of these care-free nature-worshippers instead of that of official circles. We are told that when he received from the Emperor Ning Tsung the insignia of the Golden Girdle, he hung them up in the courtyard of the Academy and retired some time afterwards to Liu-t'ung ssü, the temple where Mu-ch'i lived and painted. His eccentric nature and fondness for wine were proverbial and brought him the nickname of Fêng-tzũ (Crazy fellow). Yet, a great number of his works are recorded by Chinese historians, because he had begun as an academician and reached the degree of *tai chao* (about 1202–1204).

Mu-ch'i (or hsi), the monk painter, who, after all, may have been the greatest genius, and whose influence reached very far both in China and in Japan, is almost forgotten in his own country. The only historical information available about him is that he came from the country of Shu (Szechuan) to Chekiang, where he lived first in the Ching-shan temple and later in Liu-t'ung ssü, a temple near Hang-chou, which he refounded and which became the main centre of the Mu-ch'i school. His real name was Fa-ch'ang, and he must have been born in the early part of the thirteenth century, because one of his maturest pictures is dated 1269; and he is said to have been a pupil of Wu-chun (d. 1249). He painted "dragons, tigers, apes, cranes, wild geese in the rushes, landscapes, and figures. His conceptions were quite simple and natural; he used no ornamental elaboration, but painted in a coarse and repellent fashion, not in accordance with the ancient rules and really not for refined enjoyment" (*Hua Shih Hui Yao*).¹

The traditional Chinese attitude towards Mu-ch'i's art is characteristically expressed in the above quotation; his artistic ability could not be denied, but his manner of painting was strongly criticized. And the attitude was quite similar towards Liang K'ai: "When the painters of the Academy saw Liang K'ai's really mysterious works, they could not help respecting him; but those paintings of his which have been preserved are all of a coarse kind executed in an abbreviated manner." Other depreciations of a similar kind could be quoted, but it seems hardly necessary, as they are much less valuable for the appreciation of the painter than as characterizations of some conservative critics.²

¹ Cf. *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 52, l. 37. The historical data *re* Mu-ch'i have been made available for Westerners by Waley in *Zen Buddhism in its relation to Art*, London, 1922, and by O. Kümmel in his article on the painter in *Allgemeines Lex. d. Bild. Künstler*, Band 25 (1931), which also contains an exhaustive list of Mu-ch'i's works in Japanese collections.

² The Chinese opinions about Liang K'ai are found in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*. O. Kümmel has collected the biographical data about the painter, and a list of his work in an article in *Ostasiat. Zeitschrift*, 1929, p. 206. Cf. also Waley's *Zen Buddhism*, as above.

To the painters themselves this disapproval on the part of the official representatives of good taste and traditional art was certainly a matter of complete indifference. They did not paint in order to produce beautiful pictures, but to express a state of consciousness which to them was the greatest happiness and the highest form of reality. Art was to them "delving down into the Buddha that each of us unknowingly carries within him", to quote the words of Waley. "Unless," says the Ch'an aesthete, "the artist's work is imbued with this vision of the subjective non-phenomenal aspect of life, his productions will be mere toys."¹ This formulation of the fundamental tenet of Ch'an Buddhism in reference to art, which, according to this, should express the reality that may be reflected in the spiritual self of man, seems excellent, but when the same author goes on to say that "Zen (Ch'an) aims at the annihilation of consciousness, whereas art is produced by an interaction of conscious and unconscious faculties", he seems to take consciousness in a rather narrow and purely intellectual sense. A Japanese writer on Zen gives a different explanation of the doctrine regarding the active development of individual consciousness: "To know self we must expand, contact the universal life, universal spirit." We must awaken our inmost vision pure and divine, the Mind of Buddha, or Bodhi. This expansion of the individual consciousness becomes possible when man realizes that his inmost nature is essentially the same as the spiritual reality, which is the root of everything in the universe.² He then becomes a conscious part of the great universal life; "he is not merely surrounded by it on all sides; it permeates his whole existence. But he can never be enlightened unless he awakens it within himself by means of meditation. To drink water is to drink universal water; to awaken Buddha-nature is to be conscious of Universal Spirit." This is the final aim of all the Ch'an practices—mental and physical—the way to freedom and happiness. When it has been attained, the consciousness of man is illumined by "a light that can never be extinguished by doubt or fear, just as sunlight cannot be destroyed by mist or clouds".

This way of Ch'an was by no means new or unknown to the Chinese; it was closely akin to Tao, and it had been taught more or less definitely ever since the introduction of Buddhism by those schools which lay the main stress on the development of man's inner nature through meditation. But the means and methods of Ch'an were often quite extraordinary. Intellectual studies and definitions were shunned as mental limitations. The training was of a more practical and direct kind, intended to arouse the whole inner nature of the student, his self-activity. The instruction of the teachers was by example, or communicated in riddles and parables to stimulate intuition; instead of explanations by words the students sometimes received a slap in the face or were met with a roar or with absolute silence. Certain methods of meditation (derived from Indian Yoga) were strictly applied; the student was to become master of his body with all its passions and of his

¹ Waley, *Zen Buddhism in its Relation to Art*, p. 22.

² Kaiten Nukariya, *The Religion of the Samurai*, London, 1913, pp. 92, 132, 193, etc.

mind with all its erring thoughts. He should become able to free himself at will from all the distracting influences of the mental and material life, so that his consciousness could reflect, as the quiet mirror of the mountain lake, glimpses of a reality that no outward senses and no intellectual reasoning can convey. It would hardly be correct to call the Ch'an students ascetics, they did not emaciate their bodies, but they became indifferent to much that seems essential to the material life and comfort of ordinary people, and they appeared often rough and reckless with their lack of intellectual refinement and their disdain of learning. But their love and comprehension of nature was intense, because here they found reflections of that same Buddha-nature that they tried to develop in themselves. The falling leaves and blooming flowers nay, even so-called inanimate things, like stones and mountains, "revealed to them the holy law of Buddha." The greatest book was to them "the so-called sūtra which is written in characters of Heaven and man, of beasts and *asuras*, of hundreds of grass, and thousands of trees".¹ Truly, a book for painters who sought to represent the essentials of all that is.

But the importance of Ch'an to the artists did not lie simply in the fact that it carried them so very close to the heart of nature, that it made them look at every form, be it stone, tree, bird, or beast, and listen to every sound of wind or waves as a manifestation of a great consciousness that they also sought within themselves; it meant more than that: It gave wings to their imagination and awakened in their hearts a feeling of unity or oneness with all that lives, which went far beyond that of any other form of pantheistic romanticism. They gained to some extent the power of projecting their own consciousness into that of the trees and the birds or the figures that they painted. All these things were not simply represented as phenomena of a more or less individual character, as in the works of the previous Sung-painters, but as parts or reflections of themselves, symbolic perhaps, though not in the ordinary intellectual sense, but spiritually, because they reflected glimpses of reality, actual experiences from the painter's soul. This was more than romantic poetry; it was vision, life, and truth.

The recording of such fleeting glimpses from a world beyond that of sensual observation demanded, of course, the greatest dexterity, a supreme mastership of technical methods, and an utmost reduction of material labour. They had to be written down as swiftly and easily as the wind blows and the waves roll. It was the last perfection of the "splash ink" (*p'o mo*) technique; it had been far developed already by earlier painters of Ch'an inspiration, like Shih K'o and Wang Hsia of the ninth century, but none of them had been able to give as much as Mu-ch'i or Liang K'ai in a few decisive strokes, or dissolved as freely as these painters forms into splashes of ink. It is evident that pictures produced in this way must become supremely irrational (the Chinese critics call them coarse, muddled, or abbreviated), and that they hardly can be analysed or described in words as pictures which are composed in a more formal sense. Their motives are often of the simplest kind:

¹ Nukariya, op. cit., 69, 73, etc.

a few flowers or fruits, two birds on a bamboo branch, a single figure, some mountains and trees in the haze, or distant sails on misty waters, but they convey glimpses from a world that has no limits, embracing infinity of space and eternity of time, like the enlightened mind of the Ch'an student.

Yet, it is evident that these painters chose the motives for their most important pictures from the historical or didactic circle of the Dhyāna teachings. Mu-ch'i did a number of pictures which also by their motives are illustrations or expositions of Ch'an Buddhism, as for instance: *Kuanyin*, *Monkeys and Crane*, the famous triptych in Daitokuji, Kyoto, painted, according to inscription, by the priest Fa-ch'ang from Shu (*Toyo*, ix, pls. 84-86); *The Dragon and the Tiger*, likewise in Daitokuji, signed and dated 1269 (*Toyo*, ix, pls. 90-91); *Arhat in Meditation*, in Baron Iwasaki's collection (*Toyo*, ix, pls. 87-88); *Lao-tzū*, belonging to Mr. Suenobu (*Sogen-meigwashu*, pl. 28); *Bodhidharma* in Mr. Abe's collection (*Sogen-meigwashu*, pl. 29); *The Priest Chien-tzū playing with Crabs*, belonging to Baron Masuda (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 89); *Dragon appearing in Clouds*, one belonging to Viscount Akimoto (*Kokka*, 209), another to Mr. Nezu, Tokyo; *Monkeys* (as symbols of human folly), one belonging to Count Matsudaira (*Kokka*, 425), another to Count Sakai (*Sel. Rel.*, xi). To the same class of picture with a religious or symbolic significance may also be counted the one representing *An Old Pine Tree and a Bull-headed Shrike* in Daitokuji (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 92) and the *Bull-headed Shrike* in the collection of Baron Matsudaira (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 93), whereas Mu-ch'i's pictures of *Swallows and Lotus* and of *Doves and Bamboos* in the Matsudaira collection, *Sparrows and Bamboos*, in the Nezu collection, and *Rose-Mallows in Rain*, in Daitokuji, are hardly more symbolic than the various fragments of his two famous landscape scrolls, representing the *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (cf. *Toyo*, ix, pl. 94; *Sogen-meigwashu*, pls. 34, 35). These are pure nature views transposed into subjective visions of infinity.

It may be added that the attributions of the above-mentioned and a few more pictures in Japanese collections to Mu-ch'i are, with two exceptions, based either on tradition (which may, in some instances, be followed to the fifteenth century), or on seals, and that the proof of Mu-ch'i's seals is complicated by the records of a Japanese painter, Mokuan or Mo-an,¹ who was active during the first half of the fourteenth century in some of the Ch'an temples in the neighbourhood of Hang-chou and Su-chou. He is said to have imitated Mu-ch'i so successfully that the abbot of Liu-t'ung ssū called him "a reincarnation of Mu-ch'i" and presented him, in recognition of his artistic activity, two of Mu-ch'i's seals, which had been preserved in the temple. The possibility lies thus near at hand that some of the pictures marked with Mu-ch'i's seal are painted by this "second Mu-ch'i" (as the Japanese called him), though nobody has as yet been able to detect such differences of style as would justify a division of the above-mentioned works to two different personalities. They may thus well serve as examples of Mu-ch'i's manner.

The works preserved under Liang K'ai's name in Japanese collections are

¹ Cf. Kummel's Article on Mo-kuan in *Allgem. Lexikon d. Bild. Künstler*, Band 25.

mostly signed and may also, like those of Mu-ch'i, be divided into illustrations of parables or personalities connected with Dhyāna Buddhism, and nature studies, mostly landscapes, but besides these he treated of historical subjects. The most carefully executed of all his works is the great picture representing *Shākyamuni on His Way to the Bodhi Tree*, belonging to Count Sakai. (Pl. 74.) It must have been a comparatively early work, as it, according to inscription, was painted in the presence of the emperor, and may have been accompanied by two snow landscapes (in the Count Sakai and the former Akaboshi collections, *Toyo*, ix, pls. 73, 74). Further developed in pure Ch'an style are the two pictures of *The Sixth Patriarch, Hui-nung, chopping a Bamboo Pole* and *tearing a Written Scroll into pieces*, the former belonging to Count Sakai, the latter to Count Matsudaira (*Toyo*, ix, pls. 67, 68). Of still freer design, executed in the broadest *p'o mo* fashion, are the pictures of *Han-shan and Shih-tê* in the Matsudaira collection (*Kokka*, 114), and in the collection of Mr. Isogai Sheizo, Tokyo (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 65), and the representations of the *Dancing P'u-tai* in the Murayama collection (*Sogen-meigwashu*, pl. 24) and *P'u-tai Watching Fighting Cocks* in the collection of Count Sakai. There are still other pictures ascribed to Liang K'ai which represent exhilarated Taoists or priests, but none of them can compare in artistic significance with the imaginative portrait of *Li T'ai-po*, walking upright, reciting a poem, which is one of the supreme masterpieces of Chinese painting (Count Matsudaira collection). Related to this picture by its motive and by the masterly characterization of the main figure, though quite different in design, is the short scroll (c. 2 feet) which represents *Wang Hsi-chih Writing on the Fan of an Old Woman* (formerly in the Imperial Manchu Household collection in Peking). The fan is reverently supported by its owner before the great master, who stands slightly stooping, concentrating all his attention on the brush, while a servant stands behind him with the ink-stone. A big trunk of a willow completes the composition. To judge by the literary records (exhaustively quoted in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*), this must have been one of Liang K'ai's most famous pictures, but beside it at least twenty-four other paintings by the master are mentioned, a number of landscapes with birds, fishermen, and travellers, Buddhist motives, and legendary subjects. It seems superfluous to enumerate the titles, since the pictures (possibly with exception of the Sixteen Lohans) have not been identified, but it may be worth recording, that the finest of them, according to some critics, was a picture representing *T'ao Yüan-ming*, the popular idol among the early Chinese writers, walking with a flower in his hand under a pine-tree—a representation which may not have been unlike the above-mentioned study of Li T'ai-po.

The relatively well-authenticated and numerous pictures by Liang K'ai still preserved seem to reveal an artistic evolution in which the painter's contact with Ch'an Buddhism became of decisive importance. He was once a prominent academician, though of a rather intemperate kind, and his great ideal in art was Wu Tao-tzū. He painted then traditional Buddhist subjects and landscapes, executing "the figures with great care even to the minutest hair, but the trees and

stones he touched in with strong brush-strokes which, indeed, served to accentuate the imposing spirit of the carefully and reverently drawn figures".¹ This characterization fits perfectly the above-mentioned picture of Shākyamuni walking out of the mountains, where the figure is very carefully drawn and modelled and covered in a drapery which swirls à la Wu Tao-tzū, while the enclosing mountains and dry trees are painted in broader fashion with a stronger brush. The expressiveness of the figure is extraordinary, and it is accentuated by the majestic scenery. Without the surrounding landscape the figure would not mean so much.

This becomes most evident if we accept the scroll representing the *Sixteen Lohans* (in the collection of Mr. Abe Fusajiro in Sumiyoshi) as an example of Liang K'ai's early style. (Pl. 75.) It is known to me only through the series of large photographs published in Peking, which do not convey a convincing impression; yet, it may be by the master as signed and certified by later experts. The Lohans and their servants are represented in more or less grotesque shapes against the neutral background; they are characterized in an almost humorous fashion, and clad in long mantles, which sometimes form whirling folds of the type that is known from the copies of Wu Tao-tzū's works, but at other times are painted with sharp snappy strokes "like broken reeds". In spite of the technical dexterity and the great variation in the types, the picture is rather disappointing by its repeated exaggerations in the characterization. The painter seems to be mocking at the motive in a somewhat coarse fashion. The comparison with Li Lung-mien's representation of the same motive, which is suggested in the colophon by Wang Wên-chih (1789), is certainly not to the advantage of Liang K'ai.

Decidedly superior as a work of art is the above-mentioned picture of *Wang Hsi-chih Writing on the Fan*. (Pl. 76.) The fluently painted figures reflect in every stroke the impetus of creative genius, and the broadly sketched trunk adds, indeed, something to the balance and the significance of the design. The whole thing is thrown down spontaneously with a light and swift brush without any of the calligraphic mannerisms which are so prominent in the earlier pictures. From a picture like this there is only a short step to the two larger compositions representing the *Sixth Ch'an Patriarch chopping the Bamboo Pole* and *The Same tearing the Sūtra Scroll*. (Pl. 77.) The spiritual impetus is the same, though it has become still more intense; the somewhat jerky and abrupt brush-strokes, done with flashing speed, in a *tempo furioso*, seem to reflect a rather vehement temperament, answering well to the traditions about this Ch'an teacher, who met his students with shouts and roarings. And by the introduction of a tall trunk in the one picture, a couple of loose branches in the other, the artist has created an impression of height and space, which detaches the figures from the limitations of the objective world and make them live in the universe of their consciousness.

In the picture of Li T'ai-po the artist has renounced all exterior arrangements or additions, but nevertheless created a very definite atmosphere—he has actually

¹ *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*.

accomplished with half a dozen touches of the brush one of the most convincing representations of an inspired poet ever made with the brush. (Pl. 78.) The material means are reduced to a minimum, the form is simplified to the utmost; yet, it is quite sufficient to serve as a vehicle for the inspiration which radiates from this picture as it does from the poems of Li T'ai-po. It is as if the artist had felt a reverberation of Li Po's immortal rhythms in his soul, as if the poet had lived again in his consciousness, from where he was projected, like an inspiring flash, on the paper.

Liang K'ai also painted a great number of landscapes, mostly with birds, as appears from titles enumerated in *Nan Sung Yüan Hua Lu*, but sometimes with fishermen and peasants. An example of this type is the small and probably early landscape belonging to Mr. Hayasaki Benkichi, showing a fisherman who returns with his net on the shoulder along the rocky shore, framed by an old tree.¹ Other characteristic landscapes by Liang K'ai still preserved in Japan are the two large snow scenes in the Count Sakai and in the former Akaboshi collection (*Toyo*, ix, pls. 73, 74) with a very soft hazy atmosphere over snow-covered hills and stumpy trees in the foreground; furthermore, the round, fan-shaped picture in the Count Daté collection, representing *A Pair of Herons alighting on Rocks*, in which the strongly painted rocks and the big bird on the wing serve as a most effective accentuation of the empty space. (Pl. 79.) Closely akin to this is the album leaf representing *Flying Geese on a Shore with Reeds*, which belongs to Prince Tokugawa (*Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 79). More traditional in design are the landscapes with a man seated on a cliff under a pine-tree, belonging to Mr. Magoshi Kyohei (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 69), and with a man reading under a pine-tree, where also a buffalo is grazing, belonging to Marquis Kuroda (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 72), but they are executed in a softer tone than any of the earlier landscapes, like visions rather than like renderings of actual views. They are Ch'an pictures just as well as the figure scenes mentioned above, reflections from a consciousness for which the commonest scene may embrace the immensity of the universe.

The pictures which are still preserved in Japanese collections under Mu-ch'i's name have been enumerated above, and we have also dwelt on the religious background of his artistic activity, but it may be necessary to consider a little closer some characteristic examples of his style. Unlike Liang K'ai's works, which were mostly legendary (illustrative) or landscapes with figures, Mu-ch'i's most important paintings were evidently done with a didactic purpose, to be used in the Ch'an temples. They were executed on a large scale and carefully finished, though in pure Ch'an fashion, with less insistence on illustrative details than on the general tonality or atmosphere of the motive. The best examples are still in the possession of a Ch'an temple, though not in China; I mean the pictures belonging to Daitokuji in Kyoto (now deposited in the museum in the same city), i.e. the triptych representing Kuanyin, a Crane and a Monkey with her baby, and the diptych

¹ Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 83.

representing the Dragon and the Tiger. The motives are evidently symbolic; the triptych may refer to the enlightenment that can be reached through meditation in contrast to the desire for long material life and empty intellectual speculations (sometimes symbolized by monkeys); the diptych is evidently a representation of the divine and the material, or the spiritual and the animal, powers which pervade all nature.

According to the notes which I took down before the originals some ten years ago, they are painted on a very thin and rather loosely woven silk with an exceedingly light, soft brush and watery ink, which has soaked in so completely that in some places it can hardly be distinguished from the silk. The designs are balanced not only by certain well-emphasized leading lines (observable also in the reproductions) but also by the darker and lighter tones, the former being mostly placed towards the sides or in the corners, so that the central portion of the picture stands out light and transparent. This disposition of the tones is particularly effective in the central piece, the white-robed Kuanyin seated on a cliff at the side of a bamboo sprout and under some overhanging herbs (Pl. 80), but it may also be noticed, with certain modifications, in the pictures of the White Crane and the Monkey. The monkey, which balances herself on the diagonal branch in the centre of the picture, is black with the exception of its most important part, the round moon face, which is white. (Pl. 81.) But in spite of the marked contrasts between the darks and the lights, the pictorial effect is dominated by the soft greyish hue, in which the forms are enveloped, or rather steeped, with an almost imperceptible gradation of tones. It is produced mainly by the bare silk slightly toned, at least by age.

The brush-strokes are more floating and continuous than in Liang K'ai's paintings. They become particularly effective in the mantle of the meditating Bodhisattva, which is designed with long, softly curving lines suggesting complete repose, the same harmonious quietness that is reflected by the water at her feet. The decorative design has here, to an unusual degree, become the vehicle for the spiritual import of the motive.

Related to this Kuanyin picture by its general design and the treatment of the main figure is the painting in Baron Iwasaki's collection of a Ch'an monk seated in meditation on a mountain terrace surrounded by a large snake, which opens its poisonous jaws on his lap. (Pl. 82.) The grim imperturbability of the man in this dangerous situation reflects an intense spiritual concentration, a will-power which completely controls the situation. Though the figure is in profound repose, it may well be called dynamic. It is drawn with tightly curving lines, which form a symbol of massive strength; it is white like a luminous body against the setting of dark shrubs and trees, far from beautiful in the ordinary sense of the word, but impressive and great as a personification of some elemental power. The atmosphere of this picture seems replete with spiritual significance transposed into qualities of line and tone.

The Dragon and the Tiger in Daitokuji may be no less remarkable from a purely pictorial point of view, because here, too, one may admire the artist's strong and sweeping brush-work, his faculty of imparting life by every touch, but they lack the human element and the perfect balance which ennobles the Kuanyin triptych. The pictures have also suffered more by exposure and careless handling; they are darkened and probably cut down at the sides, which makes the enormous beasts look somewhat cramped within the narrow spaces. Yet, they are expressive of the elemental forces symbolized by these animals; the dragon with flashing eyes and shimmering scaly body is issuing as lightning from the clouds, while the tiger sits erect with tense sinews, ready to spring at its prey with the swiftness of the storm wind that shakes the bamboos in the background.

The landscapes which are considered as Mu-ch'i's works are all sections out of two scrolls, which both represented the *Eight Famous Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*. Of the smaller one only three fragments exist: *The Autumn-Moon* (Prince Tokugawa collection), *The Night-Rain* (Baron Masuda collection), and *The Evening-Bell* (Count Matsura collection, *Selected Relics*, v), but of the larger scroll five sections still exist: *Returning Sails off a Distant Coast* (Count Matsudaira collection) (Pl. 83), *The Evening-Bell* (Marquis Tokugawa collection), *Sunset over a Fishing Village* (Mr. Nezu's collection) (Pl. 83), *Wild-Geese alighting* (ex. Viscount Matsudaira collection), and *Evening Snow on the Hills* (ex. Marquis Tokugawa collection). Few motives have been more consistently treated by Chinese landscape painters than the *Eight Views of Hsiao and Hsiang*, yet, few have yielded a richer variety of poetry and pictorial beauty. They formed simply a set of suggestive names or formulæ for continuous compositions of water, mountains, wooded shores, and sandy beaches, sometimes enlivened by boats and fishermen or alighting birds, represented at different seasons or hours of the day. They were useful as labels or keys to the ideas traditionally associated with the motives, which could be interpreted according to the creative imagination of each artist, quite independent of any local colour or description. It was the symbolic suggestiveness rather than any actual scenery which lent artistic significance to pictures of the *Autumn-Moon over the Tung-t'ing lake* (where the rivers abut), *The Night-Rain over Hsiao and Hsiang*, *The Evening-Bell from a distant Temple*, etc.

Mu-ch'i certainly realized this better than anybody. He painted landscapes which are simply fragments of the universe, formulæ for his visionary ideas of unlimited space and soundless harmony. The objective motives seem to sink into the peaceful depths of his consciousness and reissue replete with an inner life that is suggested by gradations of tone and swift, decisive brush-strokes. What he painted, or rather suggested by suppressing as much as possible of material definition, is above all atmosphere—it is the life-breath of his landscapes, the mirror in which infinity is reflected. The forms are indicated only in so far as they may serve to enhance this undefinable element. As an example may be mentioned the picture of *Returning Sails off a distant Coast*.¹ Only at the one end of the composition is the

¹ Reproduced in *Toyo*, ix, pl. 94. *Kokka*, 291. *Selected Relics*, xv, and elsewhere.

foreshore accentuated by some dark trees and the background by mountains, which grow fainter as they dissolve into the grey mist. The rest of the picture is free expanse; there is no foreground, no background, simply open space. The only support that the eye can find here are two small sailing boats which are more felt than seen—it is movement rather than the form which is perceived. But one cannot help feeling the chilly evening breeze, which sweeps the fog into long wisps and makes the soft tree-tops wave like silky plumes. It is less a visual impression than a vibrating reflection from the artist's consciousness which forms the motive—an echo of distant music, a breath of wind, a movement in the air—all that gives wings to his imagination and makes him see something more than simply a few boats in the fog.

The limitless space or atmosphere into which Mu-ch'i's landscapes are steeped, and by which they receive this mysterious life and significance, is also to be found in his pictures of birds and flowers, though it is here produced by the design rather than by the use of misty tones. The small birds, such as the *Sparrows* (in Mr. Nezu's collection) or the *Dove* (in Count Matsudaira's collection), are placed on some very thin and tall branches which project far into the otherwise empty picture where the birds form the centre. (Pl. 84.) They balance on these quivering supports as lightly as only such airy beings can do; around them is emptiness or rather, the all-containing space—a reflection of the artist's consciousness, in which they live as winged thoughts.

More important are the larger pictures of the *Hahacho Bird* (Bull-headed Shrike), of which the best is in Count Matsudaira's collection. (Pl. 85.) The bird is standing on an old trunk towards one side of the picture; the rest of it is empty ground, only at the very top enters a slender twig of a pine branch, making the beholder realize more strongly the extraordinary height and spaciousness of the design. The large black bird stands there upright, almost as a human being, on tall legs with the head sunk into the breast—a picture of introspective thought and quietness, the *samādhi* of the Ch'an philosopher. The extraordinary effect of the design rests mainly on the perfect balance between the strongly accentuated jet-black bird and the transparent space, which is quite unbroken except for the tender twigs at the top.

In spite of its highly subjective character, Mu-ch'i's art exercised a far-reaching influence. This was most immediately felt by the painters who lived as Ch'an monks in the temples near Hang-chou towards the end of the Sung and during the early part of the Yüan period, but it may also be traced in the works of more worldly painters and, as an undercurrent, in the general modification of style which took place in the Yüan period, not to speak of the all-absorbing interest in Ch'an painting which became manifest in Japan at the beginning of the Ashikaga period, when many of Mu-ch'i's works were secured for the Ashikaga Shogun's collection. The main reason for this influence was evidently that Mu-ch'i's art represented not simply a new manner of handling brush and ink, but the result of a

new spiritual impetus, by which the artistic activity as such was modified. Wherever the influence of the Ch'an philosophy was felt, the painter was brought into a more intimate spiritual relation with his work; he was no longer the observer or designer of outward objects or scenery, but the transmitter of things as they really are. His main endeavour was to become in his consciousness so perfectly united or fused with the motive that he could re-embody its spiritual significance in a pictorial symbol.

It would require too much space to enumerate all the pictures (particularly in Japanese collections) in which this Ch'an principle of creation may be traced; some of them are by anonymous masters, others by monks, whose names have been recorded, but whose lives are practically unknown. Most remarkable among these pictures is the *Mountain Village in Mist* by Ying-yü-chien in Count Matsudaira's collection (*Kokka*, 429; *Toyo*, ix, pl. 38). (Pl. 86.) The motive is here dissolved into broad splashes of ink indicating some roofs amongst trees on a rising ground around a bay, mountains further away, and a bridge in the foreground, but there are hardly any actual forms, simply a succession of black tones which dissolve in the mist. Yet, the whole thing is deliberately done with marvellous concentration, convincing, as far as it goes, and suggestive of atmospheric or colouristic beauty. Ying-yü-chien served as secretary of Ching-tzŭ ssŭ, the famous temple at the Western Lake in Hang-chou, and is said to have followed in the footsteps of the famous priest-painter Hui-ch'ung, but his artistic relationship with Mu-ch'i (his somewhat younger (?) contemporary) seems undeniable. Other landscapes attributed to Ying-yü-chien, such as the short scroll in Prince Tokugawa's collection, and the large mountain scene belonging to Mr. Maruyama in Osaka (*Sogen-meigwashu*, pl. 46), represent him under a somewhat more traditional aspect, painting the rounded hills and plumy trees as shadows in the mist.

Another monk who excelled in this kind of ink-painting was Wu-chun (*hao*, Fo-chien), known also through a treatise on Ch'an. He belonged to the Lin-chi school and lived in the Ching-shan temple on mount Yu-wang, but was also called by the Emperor Li Tsung to give some instruction at the court. He died 1249. According to certain traditions, he was the teacher of Mu-ch'i. His three ink-sketches in Marquis Tokugawa's collection (*Kokka*, 243) are very lightly painted and have not the power of expression as do the more important works of this school, yet they are praised by a Japanese authority for their "deep suggestiveness in the midst of great simplicity".

Two priest-painters, unrecorded in Chinese sources, but mentioned by Soami in *Kundaikwan*, are Lo-ch'uang and Tsu-wêng.¹ The former lived at Liu-t'ung ssŭ, the temple of Mu-ch'i, near Hang-chou, and is considered to be the master of a picture in the Asabuki collection representing *A Goose alighting among Lotus-leaves*, executed in Mu-ch'i's manner, though rather inferior in strength (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 96); the latter is known through a picture of Liu Tsu, represented in tattered garments,

¹ Cf. *Ostasiat. Zeitschrift*, i, pp. 199, 203.

and carrying a staff with a hatchet on the shoulder (formerly Kawasaki collection, *Kokka*, 111). Of the same kind as this are Li Ch'üeh's pictures in Myoshinji in Kyoto representing *Bodhidharma and Fêng-kan* (*Kokka*, 269). The influence from Liang K'ai seems here most evident.

The tradition of Ch'an painting was carried on by many highly gifted artists in the temples at Hang-chou and elsewhere in the South, long after the end of the Sung dynasty. It formed a definite current within the art of the thirteenth century, and it may thus not be out of place to mention here some of its later representatives. A very productive and characteristic painter was the monk Indra of the T'ien-chu temple, whose name is written in modern Chinese, Yin-t'o-lo, but who is better known under his Japanese appellation: Indara. He must have been active during the second half of the century, because some of his pictures are provided with inscriptions by better known men of the time.¹ There are at least seven pictures attributed to him in Japanese collections (cf. *Kokka*, 35, 110, 173, 201, 223, 310, 392) and two of them, *Bodhidharma* in Marquis Asano's collection and *Vimalakirti* in Mr. Murayama's collection, are signed with the painter's name. The motives for his pictures are all borrowed from Ch'an or Taoist legends; as for instance, *Tanhsia burning the Image of Buddha* and *Yao-chun talking to a Visitor* (Pl. 87), *Han-shan and Shih-tê*, *Fêng-kan with two Companions*, *Bodhidharma* and so on. All these pictures exhibit great skill of brush-work, and they are highly entertaining as illustrations, particularly through the humorous characterization of the figures, but they are not to be compared with Mu-chi's creations. The weakest among these pictures make us realize how easily this mode of impressionistic ink-painting became a clever and empty play with the brush when not directed by a strong creative will or spiritual inspiration.

Another priest who, although not belonging to the Ch'an school, made ink-drawings of Bodhidharma and other Buddhist patriarchs in a somewhat similar fashion as Indra was P'u-kuang, whose *tzü* was Yüan-hui, and *hao*, Hsüeh-an. He is said to have been the head of a religious sect called the Dhūta and to have served as a professor in the Chao-wên College in the reign of Kublai Khan. He was active still in 1312.² According to tradition, P'u-kuang painted landscapes in the style of Kuan T'ung, and bamboos in the manner of Wên T'ung, but the only paintings nowadays known by him are a series of nineteen album leaves representing Bodhidharma, P'u-tai, and seventeen Lohans, in Baron Iwasaki's collection (cf. article in *Kokka*, 333, with reproductions of some of the pictures). The pictures are interesting as examples of the last degree of simplification of the pure ink-style, the "abbreviated" manner, as the Chinese sometimes called it, but their artistic significance is limited. The figures are indicated almost with bare outlines, only the heads being sometimes more carefully modelled, and as the lines are lacking the vigour and decision that we found, for instance, in Liang K'ai's similarly done

¹ Cf. O. Kümmel's article, Indra, in *Allgem. Lexicon d. bild. Künstler*, Band 18 (1925).

² Cf. Waley, *Index*, and Pelliot, *T'oung P'ao*, 1922, p. 351.

portrait of Li-po, the forms appear often empty and loose. They are written down with the same swift and easy brush as the grass characters which accompany each one of these Lohans and acquire by this a breath of momentary life like fleeting thoughts, which have not quite matured to works of art. (Pl. 88.) The general shape is sometimes brought out suggestively, when the figure is shown from the side, or from the back, wrapped in a loose mantle, but when the artist uncovers the body and gives details, such as hands or feet, he misses the essentials. P'u-kuang was evidently a great calligraphist, who to some extent succeeded in translating forms into calligraphic symbols.

Superior as works of art are the two landscapes with shepherds and buffaloes in Baron Dan's collection, which are traditionally attributed to Chang Fang-ju, an artist who is mentioned only in *Kundaikwan* (*Kokka*, 246; *Sogen-meigwashu*, pls. 49, 50). He is said to have been active in the Yüan period, but the character of his art is quite the same as that of the Hang-chou Ch'an painters. The compositions are unilateral with a bit of a trunk and some branches penetrating from the one side (as in the pictures of the Ma school), but the big animals are placed practically in the centre of the foreground, emphasizing the balance of the designs. In one of the pictures the boy is riding on the bull, in the other he is seated on a promontory under the pine branch, angling in unseen waters—adding thus a note of contemplative stillness to the pastoral scene. (Pl. 89.) The main parts are laid in with a strong brush in dark ink and stand in perfect relation to the large stretches of empty ground, so that the picture as a whole becomes a convincing and great work of art.

(6) *Painters of Dragons and Fishes*

One of the most significant motives of Chinese painting, which to some extent was also cultivated by the Ch'an painters, was the Dragon, a mystic, fantastic, and awe-inspiring being, swift as lightning, strong as a storm wind, which appears among clouds and mist, visible only to those whose enlightened minds are open to the great spiritual forces of nature. We have already mentioned some of Mu-ch'i's representations of this supreme symbol of supernal power, but there were other artists who specialized in dragon painting and carried it to the highest degree of perfection. Their mode of creation corresponded evidently very closely to that of the Ch'an painters, as the visionary motive demanded the highest degree of concentration and an immediate transmission of the flashing image, even though they may not have lived in temples or been formal adherents of Ch'an practices.

We have already had occasion to observe that there were great dragon painters in China during various dynasties; at the head of them all stands Chang Sêng-yü, the great master of the sixth century, whose dragons became famous through so many legends, and as a good second should be remembered Tung Yü, who executed some of his most terrifying dragons for the Emperor Sung T'ai Tsung (976–997). The works of these old masters exist no longer, but a discussion of

dragon paintings has been transmitted under the name of Tung Yü. It is included in the *Hua P'u*, which is ascribed to T'ang Yin, *hao*, Liu-ju (1466–1524), which is made up of miscellaneous quotations from earlier books.¹ T'ang Yin may not have been responsible for this collection, but it seems evident that it could not have been composed without the existence of earlier sources, including a treatise on dragon painting, which contains certain observations of general interest in connection with the study of Ch'ên Jung's paintings.

"Dragon paintings should possess the secret (*Tao*) of Spirit and Life. The Spirit is like the mother, and the Life (or Vitality) is like the child. When Spirit summons Life, as the mother summons the baby, how would it dare not to come? Therefore the dragons should rise towards the sky through dense mist and layers of clouds, or immerse into the bottomless depths of the turbulent waters where no human eye can reach them.

"Ancient as well as modern painters have found it difficult to pursue their forms and shapes. The dragon's form may be divided into three sections and nine similarities: the first is from the head to the neck, the second from the neck to the belly, the third from the belly to the tail; these are the three sections. The nine similarities are: the head like that of a bull, the muzzle like a donkey's, the eyes like shrimps, the horns like those of a deer, the ears like an elephant's, the scales like those of fishes, the beard like a man's, the body like a serpent's, the feet like the Fêng-bird's. Such are the similarities.

"There is a difference between the male and the female dragon: The male has horns and his body is moving in high waves. He has deep-set eyes, wide-open nostrils, pointed beard and thick scales; the body is strong towards the head and diminishing towards the tail. He is red as fire, grand and beautiful. The female dragon has no horns, and her body forms quite flat waves. The eyes are standing out, the muzzle is cut straight, the mane is curly, the scales thin, and the tail is stronger than the body.

"Dragons with open mouth are easy to represent, but those with closed mouth are difficult. If you want to make them with the sweeping brush and flowing ink bring out the life of the muscles and bones, but in order to express perfectly the essence and spirit of the dragon you must give him awe-inspiring bloody eyes, impetuously moving red beard, mist-hoarding scales, bristling mane, hair on the knees, claws, and teeth. Make him spit and hide in the rain and the mist-dew, make him skip and gambol as he soars through space—then, when the eyes are put in, he will fly away like the dragons of Chang Sêng-yu and master Yeh."²

Ch'ên Jung, the great dragon painter of the South Sung period, often called by his *hao*, Ch'ên So-wêng, was evidently no less of an eccentric character than his predecessors in the same field, though at the same time capable of serving as a government official, first as a magistrate in Shansi, then in Kiangsi, and finally as governor of P'u-t'ien in Fukien, his native province. He passed his *chin shih* degree in 1235, and reached also fame as a poet in the strong and heroic style, particularly in the Pao-tu era (1253–1258). His fame with posterity rests, however, entirely on his paintings of dragons of which half a dozen (horizontal scrolls or parts of such) have been preserved, all belonging to the highest class of Chinese painting known to us.

¹ Quoted in *Mei Shu Ts'ung Shu*, iii, v. 9, chap. 9. The critical remarks about Liu-ju's *Hua P'u* in *Shu Hua Shu Lu Chieh T'i*.

² A dragon painter who probably was active during the former Han dynasty. Cf. Giles, p. 3.

According to the biographical information about Ch'ên Jung, transmitted in the *Min Hua Chi*,¹ he painted

"the clouds among which the dragons were soaring in the 'splash ink' (*p'o-mo*) fashion and made the mist as if spitting out water. When he was drunk, he shouted aloud, took off his cap, dipped it into the ink and then smeared and rubbed with it, making a rough picture which he afterwards completed with the brush. Sometimes the whole body of the dragon was shown, sometimes only a leg or a head. The dimly defined shapes were beyond description, almost inconceivable yet, truly divine and mysterious. He also painted bamboos and pine-trees in a manner graceful as willows and strong as iron hooks and chains. Towards the end of his life his brush-manner became more and more simplified, concentrated, and wonderful. His pictures executed in deep colours were equal to Tung Yü's work."

The works of Ch'ên Jung which have been preserved may well serve to support the high esteem in which he was held by contemporary and somewhat later critics, though they are executed with more care and deliberation than the above remarks might make us expect. They represent all dragons soaring through clouds, mist, and water, quite detached from any earthly surroundings, only in one of them, belonging to Baron Yokoyama (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 79), has he added a rocky shore with some trees before the mist-enveloped mountain cave of the dragons, which, however, hardly increases the artistic importance of the picture. The two dragons in vaporous clouds belonging to Count Sakai (*Toyo*, ix, pls. 80, 81) are certainly superior as works of art and more suggestive illustrations of this supreme symbol of seething vitality. But these, too, are evidently only fragments of a longer scroll.

The most complete and important examples of his art are nowadays in the Boston Museum: one of them is a metre long section of a scroll, representing *Four Dragons and Gushing Water among Cavernous Rocks*, the other is a complete scroll, eleven metres long, in which *Nine Dragons appear through Clouds and Waves*. In the minor composition the pictorial effect depends more on the gushing water that leaps out in cascades from the split and shattered cliffs, and the wreaths of mist that circle about the caverns, than on the dragons themselves (which are largely hidden) (Pl. 90), but in the larger scroll the design is completely dominated by the glorious animals which unfold themselves through the clouds and waves. (Pl. 91.) To describe this picture in detail seems as impossible as to reflect in words the seething storm that lashes the waves into foam and scatters the clouds into vapour, nor can small pieces out of this long continuous composition give any idea of its dramatic beauty, the rhythmic movements of the design. From the inscriptions referring to various legends about dragons and dragon paintings, which the painter has added to his work,² it becomes evident that his main idea was to express through the symbols of the nine dragons the operation of Tao, the supreme principle of all manifested life. He has given this in a picture of cosmic sweep, unrolling before our eyes with brush-strokes, that have the speed and strength of the storm-wind, the

¹ Quoted in *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 51.

² Cf. Mr. John E. Lodge's article about this scroll in the *Boston Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin*, Dec., 1917.

spiritual force of the universe as it penetrates or vitalizes the furious battle of the elements.

The picture is also one of the great historical documents of Chinese painting; it is provided with more than fifty writings and seals (fifteen on the picture itself, the rest as colophons) by emperors, scholars, priests, and poets, among which the poems by Ch'ien Lung are most in evidence. The artist himself has added two inscriptions, a lengthy one in verse referring to the Taoist dragon-legends, as mentioned above, and a short one, containing the date 1244 (when the picture was made) and the following remark about its fate: "Again this scroll has come into the possession of my nephew. Does not the divinely inspired thing surely find its allotted place—a Taoist's abode?"

A still more limited and definite speciality, which was cultivated by some well-known artists, was fish-painting. The fishes, too, had a kind of symbolic significance to the Chinese, particularly the carp, which were emblems of virile strength, as they are able to swim up the streams, and sometimes were said to change into dragons—a higher, more spiritual form of strength and inspiration. A famous Chinese story which, no doubt, is alluded to by many of the fish-paintings, tells about the carp which swam up the Yellow River, leaped the rapids at Lung-men, and on the third day of the third month became a dragon.

The best known fish painters of the South Sung period were Fan An-jên and Ch'ên K'o-chiu, who both became *tai chao* in the Academy in the Pao-tu period (1253–1258).¹ The latter is said to have painted his fishes as well as his trees and flowers with colours, while the former, who is known only as a fish painter, worked in monochrome ink technique. He came from Ch'ien-t'ang in Chekiang and was nicknamed Fan-t'a (The Otter), probably because he was so familiar with the life in the water, the fishes, the rushes, and the seaweed. There is a very fine specimen of his work in Mr. Murayama's collection in Osaka, showing a whole family of fishes swimming among the seaweed, and a large crab at the bottom of the sea. (*Sogen-meigwashu*, pls. 39, 40). A still larger picture (c. 2 m. square) in the Boston Museum, representing *Two Carp leaping among Waves*, may possibly also be ascribed to him. (Pl. 92.) The fishes are painted exactly in the same style as in Mr. Murayama's kakemono, and the picture has the quality and appearance of a late Sung work. It is indeed a most effective design executed on a large scale. The brushwork is strong and bold, revealing a great master's hand. And here again, as in all the manifold creations of nature that meet us in Chinese art, it is the momentous life, the sweeping movement in the fishes and the waves, that make the core of the artistic creation.

(7) *Painters of Grape-vine, Plum-blossoms, and Narcissi*

Another branch of painting which also drew new life from Ch'an philosophy and its ensouling interpretation of every aspect of nature was flower painting, not the

¹ Cf. *Sung Yüan i-lai Hua-jen Hsing Shih Lu*.

highly ornamental and minutely naturalistic kind of flower painting which was cultivated in Hui Tsung's Academy, but a freer, more impressionistic kind in monochrome ink by which the life and spiritual significance of the flowers was expressed rather than their outward beauty. The favourite motives of most of these painters were plum-blossoms, the early messengers of spring, which have always held a particular place in Chinese art and poetry, but there were also painters who specialized in grape-vines or in orchids and narcissi. The more gorgeous garden-flowers, such as tree-peonies, hibiscus, and lotus, which had been cultivated by the academicians, no longer held their place of preference with these painters.

The greatest specialist of the grape-vine was the monk Tzŭ-wên, better known under his *hao*, Jih-kuan. The records about him are very scanty¹; we are simply informed that he came from Hua-t'ing in Kiangsu and lived in the Ma-nao monastery at Hang-chou (presumably about the middle of the thirteenth century). He revelled in wine and in a life free from all conventional restraints, as did most of these monk painters, and appeared usually in short garments even in the market places. His mastery in painting the winding stems of grape-vines was supplemented by his skill in writing grass characters; in fact, the compositions of his paintings would be incomplete without the running calligraphy among or above the tendrils of the vine. And as he painted the grapes and leaves in the same fluent manner as the grass characters, it was later on said with some reason, that his grape-vines resembled tattered priestly garments. He became known as "Wên-p'u-t'ao" (Wên of the Grapes), which may apply to his fondness for their juice as well as to his speciality in painting.

At least three of his signed works are now in Japan, i.e. a horizontal scroll in Tenryuji in Kyoto, *A Branch of Vine*, formerly in the Inouye collection (*Kokka*, 230), and a somewhat richer composition of grapes in Mr. Nezu's collection. The artistic significance of all these pictures is pre-eminently a matter of the free and strong brush-strokes by which the stems are rendered with all their characteristic jerkiness and elasticity, and the colouristic beauty of the leaves and the shining grapes is perfectly suggested. (Pl. 93.) His pictures seem to be written down like improvisations in the "running hand" style, and they are often completed with some written poem.

The painters of plum-blossoms, narcissus, and orchids were quite numerous, but comparatively little of their original works seems to have been preserved. The mode of painting which they introduced is, however, well known, because it was continued by several prominent artists in the Yüan and Ming periods, and their extraordinary fame has survived in the traditions about their lives and works. The most prominent among them, such as Hua-kuang, Yang Pu-chih, and Chao Mêng-chien, have also been made responsible for theoretical discussions of plum-blossoms,

¹ Cf. *Sung Yüan i-lai Hua-jên Hsing Shih Lu* and *Chung-kuo Jên Ming Ta Tz'ü Tien*.

so called *Mei P'u*, dealing with the symbolic significance of the motives as well as with their pictorial representation.

The oldest among these plum-blossom specialists was a monk, Chung-jên, better known as Hua-kuang, a name which he got from the Hua-kuang shan monastery at Hêng-chou in Hunan, where he spent most of his life. He was already active in the Yüan-yu era (1087–1093) and seems to have been a close friend of Huang T'ing-chien, who wrote poetical comments on some of his pictures. Yet, he is not seldom classified among the painters of Kao Tsung's time and as a teacher and friend of Yang Wu-chiu, whose *tzŭ* was Pu-chih, a well-known plum-blossom painter of this era. The *Mei P'u*, which is commonly ascribed to Hua-kuang, is provided with a concluding chapter, *Tsung-lun*, by Yang Wu-chiu, who appears to have received his knowledge in the mysteries of this art from Hua-kuang. The explanation seems to be that there were two monk-painters of plum-blossoms called Hua-kuang, i.e. the old Chung-jên, at the end of the Northern Sung period, and a younger Hua-kuang, who came from the same temple, but lived in the Hui-li temple in Chinkiang in the Shao-hsing era (1131–1162). He must have followed very closely in the footsteps of his older namesake and transmitted his ideas to posterity. It may be that the traditions concerning these two painters have been, to some extent, confounded. The *Mei P'u* of Hua-kuang is certainly not older than the Southern Sung period, when Yang Pu-chih is supposed to have written his concluding chapter. The composition of the treatise still offers some unsolved problems, but certain parts of it are interesting and well worth quoting as an introduction to our study of plum-blossom paintings, even though they may not be more than remote echoes of the ideas of the two monk-painters.¹

The first section contains certain biographical traditions about Hua-kuang and his way of painting, evidently composed by a later man (of the Yüan or Ming period?). Then follows the *K'ou Chüeh* (Remarks about the Secret of the Flowers) and the *Ch'ü Hsiang* (The Meaning of their Shapes); the third section is the *Tsung-lun* (The Summing up or Concluding Remarks) by Yang Pu-chih; the fourth is called *Hua-kuang Chih-mi* (Hua-kuang's Infatuation), the fifth *Pu-chih Chien-nan* (The Difficult Points of Pu-chih). The whole thing seems to be a compilation without strict unity or logical sequence, though based on tradition and sayings of these old painters. A few extracts are here communicated:—

“Painting of plum-blossoms in monochrome started with Hua-kuang. The virtuous old man was extremely fond of plum-trees. He planted a great number of such trees at his temple retreat, and when they were in bloom, he removed his couch under the trees and lay there chanting poems the whole day. When the moon was bright, he could not sleep, but looked at the play of the happy and lovable shadows on the window, imitating their shapes with the brush. When morning dawned, his pictures were filled with the thoughts of moonlight—exquisitely beautiful. They became appreciated everywhere. When Shan-ku (Huang T'ing-chien) saw the pictures, he

¹ Cf. the bibliographical remarks in *Shu Hua Shu Lu Chieh T'i*. Reprints of the *Mei P'u* in *Wang Shih Hua Yüan* and *Mei Shu Ts'ung Shu*.

said: "They give me the impression of walking in a cool and clear morning among some peaceful farmsteads; only the odour is missing." Many scholars and officials asked him in vain for such pictures, but on the other hand, those who did not ask received them easily.

"Whenever Hua-kuang painted, he burned incense, entered into the happiness of perfect Ch'an (meditation), and then completed the whole thing with one sweep of the brush. Someone said to him jokingly: 'Wang Tzū-yu of old liked bamboos; why do you have such a weakness for plum-trees?' To which Hua-kuang answered gravely: 'Their beauty can never be esteemed equal,' an answer which pleased those who heard it very much. The older he grew, the more wonderful became his work. At the time there were six men who followed his school, and one among them was Yang Pu-chih. Famous officials and scholars composed thousands of poems in admiration of his works. During his whole life he did more than 1,200 pictures, but when he passed away, he left behind to Shan-ku only his cap, his girdle, his table and stool, and some unsurpassed pictures."

Remarks about the Secret of the Flowers

"The secret and characteristic features of plum-blossoms can be expressed only with a firm brush-stroke without the least change or hesitation. The flowing ink should be used both thick and thin but must not form waves. Start the brush and then let it go with ease. Some strokes should come forward, drooping and bending, others should rise as if looking up towards the autumn moon, some should be curved as a drawn bow, some bent as an elbow, others straight as an arrow.

"The old (branches) are like dragon's horns, the young ones like angling rods; make them with force as you break a nail. The twigs are straight as bow strings. Avoid making the young twigs like willow branches; the older twigs resemble whips, the curving twigs are like deer's horns.

"Do not use too many strokes; the branches must not cross each other, the flowers should be made out like large coins. They may be clustering in some places; yet, without confusion; in other places they should be arranged in order; yet, without too much regularity. The old ones and the young ones must be according to their fashion; the new ones and the former ones divided by a year.

"The waste branches have no flowers; on the strong branches the flowers point towards the sky. The decaying flowers are like old eyes. One thorn may form a connection between two (flowers). The decaying twigs have many thorns and the black twigs likewise. The twigs which are like iron spears have no perfect flowers. Some flowers are doubled by growing together. The branches stretch to the rear and to the front; the flowers are divided like the holes in cash money.

"The stamens are like the whiskers of tigers; the flowers are weeping dew or hold the mist in their cups as if they were wailing and lamenting. They can stand the snow and the freezing cold. Some open big, some small; some stand upright, others lean more or less towards the side. They announce the very beginning of the spring. Blushingly they turn away their shapes and smiling faces from the sun. They spread wide open, and then begin to fade—they are the very first messengers of early spring.

"When the calyx turns away, it shows five points; when standing upright, it forms a circle. It smiles in the spring to the sun. The buds make strings of pearls; they are protected on all sides against the cold and the biting mist, well preserved until spring makes them open. Then come the butterflies and bees, and after them the spreading wind which shakes the stalks. Thus the life-cycle of the flowers is completed. But from the time they open until they fade away, they express their love most brilliantly. . . . Try to represent these flowers in their endless variety and to grasp their real essence. The rules for doing it are by no means easy to apply."

The following section "The Meaning of the Shapes" is devoted to a highly philosophical discussion of the correspondence between various parts of the plum-trees and the fundamental principles in nature:—

The flowers pertain to the Yang principles and are symbols of Heaven, while the wooden parts of the tree pertain to the Yin principle and are symbols of the Earth. Consequently the different parts of the flowers, such as the petals, stamens, seed-cases, and pistils, follow odd numbers, but the wooden parts, branches, and twigs, spread in the four directions and divide in even numbers. And there are further symbolic correspondences with such cosmic manifestations as the *t'ai chi* (primordial nature), the *san ts'ai* (the three great forces), the five elements, the 'seven regulators', the *pa kua*, etc., which evidently are inventions of some speculative mind far removed from the view-point of any genuine painter. The whole section may be a later invention.

The concluding remarks by Yang Pu-chih have a more direct application on the painter's work; they refer to the appearances of the flowers, the branches, and the trunks under different conditions, but they are of a rather simple kind and of no importance for the appreciation of the pictorial representations of plum-blossoms. Yang Pu-chih or Yang Wu-chiu was a painter in the time of the Emperor Kao Tsung, who followed Hua-kuang in his flower-paintings and Li Lung-mien in his figure compositions. He was commonly known under his *tzü*, T'ao-ch'an, but called himself 'The Pure Old Stranger'. When summoned to court, he paid no attention to the imperial command, but remained at his temple retreat delving into Ch'an practices and in the painting of exquisitely pure and fragrant plum-blossoms.¹

A better-known artist was Chao Mêng-chien, *tzü*, Tzū-ku, *hao*, I-chai, who specialized in narcissus flowers, though also painting plum-blossoms, orchids, and bamboos. He was related to the imperial family, and the early part of his life was divided between official duties and romantic enjoyments of a rather original kind, but towards the end of his life he sought his refuge in solitary meditation among the flowers, following the example of T'ao-ch'an. Tzū-ku passed his *chin shih* degree in 1226, and was considered one of the most cultured men of his time, comparable to Mi Fei, and prominent in calligraphy and poetry as well as in painting. In 1260 he became a member of the Han-lin Academy and served then as a governor of Yen-chou, but when the Sung dynasty finally succumbed to the Mongols (1279) his rôle in official life was ended. He retired to Hsiu-chou (Chekiang) and lived there to the age of 97 years.

Chao Mêng-chien's greatest pleasure in life was to travel about in a house-boat in the company of some artist friends. Time was passed in discussing fine specimens of writing and painting, which they brought along, or Tzū-ku was chanting poems to his heart's desire, completely forgetful of both food and sleep. "Sometimes he took off his cap, filling it like a tumbler with wine and sat down in a squatting position singing the *Li Sao*,² quite unmindful of everybody around him. When night was approaching and the sun was setting behind the solitary mountain, the boat was rowed to the shore and moored among the trees. Pointing to the darkest spot of the forest at the foot of the mountain, he exclaimed aloud: "This is what Hung-ku-tzū (Ching Hao) and Tung Pei-yüan liked to paint"; and the people in the neighbouring boats were

¹ Cf. *Sung Yüan i-lai Hua-jên Hsing Shih Lu*.

² The famous poem of Ch'ü Yüan, the banished minister of the Ch'u state, who when he did not succeed in winning the ear of his sovereign, drowned himself in the Mi-lo river in 295 B.C.—a song evidently most fitting for the watery excursions of Tzū-ku.

all startled by the truth of these remarks from the banished sage. He specialized in painting with light ink in the *pai miao* style narcissus, plum-blossom, orchids, *shan-fan*-trees, bamboo, and stones, and he also left to the world a *Mei P'u* (Treatise on Plum-blossoms).¹

The treatise, which is written in rhythmic style, does not contain any fresh ideas of particular interest. It opens with references to the Ch'an master Hua-kuang, "who reached the clear beauty and harmonious proportions" of the flowers, and to his successor Chien-an, "who reached the light and easy manner of composition," and it winds up with some observations about different aspects under which the blossoming branches may be represented, as for instance: surrounded by swarms of bees, covered by melting snow, hovering above the waves, or in the dim light of the rising moon; but the general hints for the use of ink and brush in painting the plum-trees are less systematic and exhaustive than those in the treatise quoted above. Chao Mêng-chien does not bring any references to Taoist philosophy, but his attitude towards the subject is characterized by the same poetic feeling as that of his predecessors, as may be realized from the following remark at the end of his treatise: "The flowers should make one feel the approach of spring or as if walking in a heavy rain."

Chao Mêng-chien is still considered by his countrymen as one of the greatest masters of the past, an appreciation which, no doubt, in this, as in so many other cases, is based on the tradition about his accomplishments as a scholar and a calligraphist more than on his painted works. The paintings of his which have been preserved all represent wild narcissus, or what the Chinese call water-fairy flowers (*shui-hsien hua*), executed in a very neat and pure style with a fine brush and light ink on greyish paper. They reveal a remarkable intimacy in the characterization of the flowers and great technical skill, a wonderful purity of line, but they can hardly be called very important as works of pictorial art. They impress us like very simple lyrical poems in which the same symbols and metaphors return almost *ad infinitum*. The long scrolls of his narcissus flowers, of which one is preserved in Wên-hua tien of the National Museum in Peking (measuring 21 ft. 6 in.) and another belonged to the Imperial Manchu Household collection (published in photographs in Peking), become rather monotonous by the continuous repetition of the same motive: Tufts of narcissi with long bending and curving leaves and white flowers which turn in different directions but always retain their somewhat empty appearance. In the minor pictures, where the motive is represented in a more concentrated fashion, he shows himself more to his advantage, as the refinement and purity of the brush-work is not weakened by repetition. (Pl. 94B.) Here one may feel with An Lu-tsun "the pure breath of the flowers and a brush-work light as a play".² The poem which Chao Mêng-chien himself had written on the picture mentioned by An Lu-tsun, gives in all its simplicity the best idea of his inspiration: "The summer month of Hêng-hsiang³ is hot and steaming; the lonely flowers spread their fragrant odour, refreshing men with their pure breath. I brought along some plants to Chekiang. One year has passed—and now two stalks are blooming."

¹ From *Hua Shih Hui Yao*, quoted in *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 52. His treatise in vol. 15 of the same book.

² *Mo Yüan Hui Kuan*.

³ Hêng-hsiang signifies probably Hêng-chou in Hunan.

Another painter recorded in *Shu Hua P'u*, whose works may have been somewhat similar to those of Chao Mêng-chien, was Chêng Ssü-hsiao, *tzü*, So-nan, also called I-wêng and San-wai Yeh-jên. He painted orchids with their roots in a fine ink style. After the fall of the Sung dynasty he lived in retirement in a village in Kiangsu and continued his work as a painter. He, too, was of the old proud scholar type, as we may judge by the answer that he gave an official who had him arrested in order to obtain some specimen of his painting: "You may have my head, but you shall not have my orchids."¹

The type of plum-blossom paintings described in the above quotations from Hua-kuang and Chao Mêng-chien is well illustrated by two scrolls recently acquired by the Freer Gallery in Washington. The older of the two pictures represents a horizontal section of an old plum-tree with far-spreading branches dotted with fresh flowers. It is executed in ink on silk in a very careful and refined, though somewhat dry manner, not very unlike that of Chao Mêng-chien's narcissi paintings, but it is signed by a less known painter: (Wang ?) Yen-sou, who was also active towards the end of the Sung dynasty. (Pl. 95.) Like so many others of these artists he used to watch the shadows of the flowers on the window in the moonlight (as appears from some poetic comments to one of his pictures in *Shu Hua Hui Kao*), and he drew them so well that not the least difference could be observed between the paintings and the shadows. Thus the natural charm and life of the flowers were retained in the pictures.

The other scroll is a famous work by Tsou Fu-lei of the Yüan dynasty who, however, followed very closely in the footsteps of Hua-kuang and consequently may be mentioned at this place. It bears the title *Ch'un Hsiao Hsi* (The Breath or Inspiration of Spring) and represents a long branch of a plum-tree sparkling with fresh flowering twigs and ending in a thin wiry sprig that shoots out like the trace of a sky rocket over a third part of the whole scroll. (Pls. 94A, 96.) In the description of this picture in *Mo Yüan Hui Kuan* it is said that "the flowers are touched in like pearls and from the main branch projects a twig, more than 2 ft. 8 in. long, which is painted with one single stroke. It is beautiful and gleamingly fresh, vigorous and strong, a most wonderful and unsurpassed thing".

The virtuosity of the design may seem exaggerated, but it would be difficult to point out a picture exhibiting a more impetuous and easily flowing brush-stroke. Tsou Fu-lei is not recorded as one of the greatest masters of his time, but this work of his may be regarded as the last perfection of a type of painting which had developed during the South Sung period and which expressed most beautifully some essential qualities of Chinese ink-painting. If Tsou Fu-lei could learn such mastership from the works of the old monk Chung-jên (Hua-kuang) he too must have been a painter of rare excellence.

Tsou Fu-lei's picture is provided with a great number of collector's seals, among which the Emperors Chia Ch'ing's and Ch'ien Lung's are most in evidence; the

¹ Cf. *Chung-kuo Jên Ming Ta Tz'ü Tien*, p. 1562, and Giles, op. cit., p. 146.

latter has also provided it with a poem that poorly balances that of the artist himself, at the other end of the scroll, in which he offers the following text to the motive of the picture:—

“ I stay in the straw-covered hut awaiting the spring's return,
calling the cold moon to make a match for the old plum;—
A thread of smoke disappears—and the empty room gets cold.
Some traces of ink as a record of the shadows on the window.”

Written in the autumn of the year 1360. In the following year his friend Yang T'ieh-yai wrote a colophon on the picture in large grass characters and several others were added later.

III

THE YÜAN PERIOD

(1) *The New Political Background. The European Travellers*

The gradual conquest of Northern China during the early part of the thirteenth century by the Mongols must have had a diverting influence on the artistic activity in that part of the country, and as the conquerors progressed southward, something of the same restraint became, no doubt, felt over wider areas, even though the South never suffered as much from the Mongols as the North. Painting in particular was, indeed, more firmly rooted in Hang-chou than in Peking, and the old current was never completely hemmed or dried up here, though it became thinner for a while. It was in the North that the new conquerors destroyed most and also made their greatest efforts of reconstruction.

The early part of their activity in China was entirely destructive. When they conquered Yen-ching (Peking), the great capital of the Chin emperors, in 1215, the city was completely sacked and destroyed; and it took almost a generation before they started to build a still finer capital on the same site. The Chin emperor had shortly before moved his court to Pien-liang (K'ai-fêng), the old Sung capital in Honan, and made great efforts to strengthen the defences of the country with a hope of checking the ruthless invaders. For some time it seemed as if the further progress of the Mongols were frustrated, but at a critical juncture the Chinese played off their former enemies, the Chin, and opened the way for the Mongols right into the heart of their old country. The immediate result of this became the fall of Pien-liang (1233) and a few months later the complete extermination of the Chin domination in China.

The rejoicing of the Chinese over the defeat of their old enemy was great, but short. The Mongols were by no means satisfied with the portion of the country that they had obtained, they continued their march towards the South, pushing their former ally before them. As they progressed, it became a struggle for life for the shrinking Sung empire. Many successful battles were fought by valiant generals; the resistance was stronger than the Mongols had expected, but intrigues and personal jealousies among the officials spoiled the defence, and gradually the military resources of the country gave out. Another important reason for the comparatively long delay in the conquest of Southern China was the fact that the Mongol rulers were diverted from it during several years through other wars in the North. It was resumed only after Kublai Khan had proclaimed himself emperor of China (1261) and started to reconstruct a new capital of the Mongol empire on the site of Yen-ching (1264), i.e. Khanbalic (the city of the Khan) or T'ai Tu (the Great Capital) which, according to Marco Polo's somewhat exaggerated statement, measured 66 *li* in circumference and had streets "so wide and straight that you could see right along them from one gate to another". It became, indeed, a capital

of the world after the government was established here under the name of the new dynasty: Yüan (Original) in 1271.

Kublai Khan was now free to direct his efforts on the conquest of the Sung empire, and this was speedily accomplished. The cities along the Yang-tzū fell in 1273, and three years later Hang-chou was forced to capitulation. The Emperor Kung Ti, who was hardly more than a boy, was sent as prisoner to Khanbalic, but two of his brothers had managed to escape to Fu-chou. One of them resumed here the imperial title, but he was hardly more than a sham-ruler, and all he could do was to save himself before the pursuing conquerors. The last stand was made by two faithful generals on an island off Canton. But it was invested by the Mongol fleet and taken by storm (1279). The only surviving general took the boy-emperor Ping upon his back and leaped into the sea.

It is said that more than 100,000 Chinese corpses strewed the waves as companions of the last scion of the House of Sung.¹ The number might well have been greater, had there been more people present, because in spite of all its political shortcomings, its defeats and weaknesses, the House of Sung had grown into the hearts of the people. It represented in an eminent degree many of the most human and lovable qualities of the Chinese people, and during its reign there had been many remarkable efforts of political improvements and social reforms besides the brilliant flourishing of literature and art.² With the extinction of the dynasty all this was brought to an end; the flickering light was blown out. China became henceforth a repository of the past. It had still its periods of political greatness and of artistic production, but the creative power, the spiritual initiative, which was manifested in China during the previous centuries, was never to be regained.

The Mongol rulers would, however, gladly have seen more of the old Chinese civilization with its glamour of literature, poetry, and art revived in so far as it was compatible with their system of government. They were all more or less interested in the religious and philosophical traditions of the country; the later among them became more and more Chinese in their mode of thinking and living. Kublai Khan was personally most attracted by the Lamaistic form of Buddhism and kept in close touch with some of the high lamas of Tibet, but he gave practically every religion then existing in China a free chance, which was most notably felt among the Christians who now increased in large numbers. His successors, with the exception of the last and the most incapable, all showed a great veneration for the Confucian doctrines and ceremonies; they issued edicts commending the Sage to the Mongols as well as to the Chinese; they ordered the Classics to be translated into the Mongolian tongue; they conferred honours on the families of Confucius and

¹ Cf. Macgowan, *Imper. History of China*, p. 435.

² A Chinese historian, quoted by Macgowan, writes: "The Sung gained the empire by the sword and kept it by kindness. Their goodness to the people was not tinged enough with severity, and so the kingdom was snatched from them. Still, through it the empire was maintained for one hundred and fifty years after it seemed to have slipped from their grasp, and it caused such men as Chang Shih-chieh and Wên T'ien-hsiang (the two last defenders of the country) to cling to the very last, and finally to give their lives for them."

Mencius; and one of them showed in his own life memorable examples of filial piety. Their respect or even admiration for the learning and civilization of the Chinese was sincere, but the political safety of the state was, at least with most of them, the primary consideration. This is clearly illustrated by the fate of Wên T'ien-hsiang, one of the foremost of the old Sung scholars, who also was considered one of the best calligraphists of the time. Kublai Khan had a great admiration for the man, irrespective of his rebellious activities, and wanted nothing better than to show him grace and honours, if he only would swear allegiance to the new dynasty, but when Wên T'ien-hsiang was brought before the emperor and urged to submit, he answered: "By the grace of the Sung emperor I became a minister; I cannot serve two masters; I only ask to die." It is said that Kublai Khan hesitated, but for reasons of state, Wên T'ien-hsiang was sacrificed, to the immense sorrow of the Chinese, who counted him as the greatest surviving scholar and patriot.

Kublai Khan knew only too well that the foundation of his empire was military power and organization, and consequently, as explained by Marco Polo, "having no confidence in the natives, he put all authority into the hands of Tartars, Saracens, or Christians who were attached to his household and devoted to his service, and were foreigners in Cathay." Messer Marco, who himself had been in the service of the Khan, expressed, no doubt, the plain truth when he wrote: "And you should know, that all the Cathayans detested the Great Khan's rule, because he set over them governors who were Tartars, or still more frequently Saracens, and these they could not endure, for they were treated by them just like slaves." This system of government held together only as long as there was a man of commanding power and justice at the head of it; when the supreme rulers began to weaken or to neglect the government, their unscrupulous assistants got a freer hand to oppress the people and to cause an ever-growing irritation, which prepared the ground for the final downfall of the dynasty through the popular revolt organized by the ex-priest Chu Yüan-chang, who in 1368 became the first emperor of the Ming dynasty.

A feature of particular interest in the development of the cultural conditions in China during the Yüan dynasty was the increasing intercourse between the Far East and Europe. It had many kinds of supporters, Chinese traders and Mongol envoys to Western countries, but those who have become best known are some of the Christian monks, who came to the Mongol empire as envoys of the popes, or on their own account, and who have left to posterity records of their travels. The earliest was Giovanni da Pian Carpini, who started in 1245, and after a short and unsuccessful visit at the Mongol camp in Karakorum came back to Rome in 1247. William de Rubruck followed in 1254, but he, too, returned after a short stay. The work of the Christian church was not seriously organized in China until Giovanni da Monte Corvino arrived 1293 in Khanbalic (the year before the death of Kublai Khan). He remained here for thirty-five years and became the first archbishop in China. With the assistance of four suffragan bishops he built up a large Christian

community with churches decorated by Chinese painters, and became widely known as a "man of God", beloved by both Christians and pagans. But it is a remarkable fact that with the fall of the Mongol power (1368), the Christian community in China shrank again almost to nothingness.

The most important source for our knowledge about conditions and customs in China during the Great Khan's rule is, however, Marco Polo's well-known account in which he relates not only his own but also his father's and his uncle's adventures and observations during many years of travel across Asia and in the Far East. The older Polos, Niccolo and Maffeo, made two journeys to the East (in 1260 and 1271), and on the latter they were accompanied by the young Marco. He won the confidence of the Great Khan and was entrusted with official missions which took him all over the country, and gave him excellent opportunities of studying conditions in general. He lived in China for over twenty years, and when he, later on, through the fortunes of war, sat in a Genoese prison (1298) and told his recollections to a fellow prisoner (who wrote them down), he lived again in imagination through all those long years of travel and service under the greatest ruler in the world. His story became thus a richly ornamented tissue of historical facts interwoven with the colours of his imagination, which still make it one of the most fascinating books that ever were written about the wonders of old Cathay.

But unfortunately Messer Marco has nothing to tell about the painters and artists of the period. If he met any of them, they evidently did not impress him particularly. He was neither a scholar nor a painter, he could certainly not read Chinese, and if some of the pictures executed in ink or water colours came under his observation, they seemed probably too strange or perhaps too slight to a man who had grown up among the gold-shimmering mosaics of Venice. In spite of his intelligence and keen observation, he was as yet the representative of an inferior culture, lacking in the intellectual and artistic refinement of the Chinese, and hardly able to understand the spiritual sources in the life of the people. And it may also be remembered that the painters of this period no longer held the prominent positions at court or in the social life of the capital as often had been their privilege under the Sung dynasty. It is true that there were exceptions like Chao Mêng-fu, Kao K'o-kung, Li K'an, and a few more, who reached high positions in the government, but their artistic occupations were no longer a reason for official promotion, as in earlier times, but rather a pastime or a recreation, and those who loved art more than official recognition, retired into seclusion far from the haunts of the turbulent world.

(2) *Religious Paintings*

In the South, where painting had deeper roots than in the North, it lived on very much as before; the change of government did not affect it, except in so far as it was dependent on official support. Religious art, in particular, which was centred at certain important temples or monasteries, continued along the same

lines as during the Southern Sung dynasty. We had occasion to point out this in reference to the Ch'an painters, whom we followed down into the Yüan period, and also in regard to the more formal school of Buddhist painting which was centred at certain monasteries in Ning-po. Most of the painters who carried on this kind of art may have been monks, but others, like Lu Hsin-chung, were professional men, and they painted their Lohans in accordance with the characteristically Chinese types which had been introduced by Li Lung-mien. Lu Hsin-chung's pictures of the Ten Kings of Hell, of which four are in the Boston Museum and the rest in Daitokuji in Kyoto, are of a more didactic or purely illustrative character, yet, decorative by their rich colouring.¹ This kind of religious painting was evidently continued through the fourteenth century at Ning-po and thereabout, but it thinned out gradually as the demand for such things decreased. A very good series of Lohans, executed probably at the very end of the thirteenth century, may be seen in Ryukoin at Daitokuji. The pictures are all provided with inscriptions by the monk Issan (1247-1317), who came to Japan in 1299, and presumably brought the pictures with him (*Kokka*, 286). The Lohans are still of the traditional Sung type, but the compositions, sometimes including several figures, are more varied than in the earlier Lohan series.

A reaction against this tradition became, however, manifest at the beginning of the Yüan period in the works of artists who were not connected with the Ning-po centres. Chao Mêng-fu painted Lohans with foreign types in adherence to models of the T'ang period. His scroll representing the Sixteen Lohans is no longer preserved, but according to his own inscription, which is quoted in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, he followed Wu Tao-tzŭ's pupil Lu Lêng-ch'ieh and represented the Lohans not as Chinese monks, but as people of Western countries, whom he had seen and befriended while he was serving as an official in the capital. The only Lohan pictures known to us which may possibly be quoted as examples of the Indian or Central-Asiatic type, reintroduced by Chao Mêng-fu, are those of the Tokaian Collection in Kyoto which, even if they are not originals, reproduce carefully compositions of the Yüan period (*Kokka*, 311). They represent types absolutely foreign to Chinese ideals; the figures stand isolated without any scenery, curiously stiff and wooden.

Somewhat akin to these in type, though more important as works of art, are the Lohans, which in Japan are ascribed to Yen Hui, an artist who is practically forgotten in China, but whose name is resplendent with fame in Japan. The Chinese sources tell us simply that Yen Hui, whose *tzŭ* was Ch'iu-yüeh, came from Chiang-shan in Chekiang, and that he was a good painter of Taoist and Buddhist subjects; "he painted also devils very cleverly, making them quite life-like." There are no signed pictures by him, but according to tradition, he would have painted the Sixteen Lohans formerly in the Hōshakuji (temple) in Yamazaki, and now in Mr. Murayama's collection in Osaka (*Kokka*, 279). The pictures are altogether of

¹ Cf. *Chinese Paintings in American Collection*, pls. 101-107, and *Kokka*, 175.

a bolder type than those of earlier Sung tradition; the figures, which are placed on rocky ledges or in grottoes—like those of Kuan-hsiu—are very large in proportion to the space, and their types are distinctly Western. (Pl. 97.) They are painted in a rather flat manner but with effective use of colour and gold in the garments. Their connection with the Li Lung-mien school (sometimes claimed by Japanese critics) is indeed very superficial; they seem to me expressive of an entirely different spirit, more realistic and less refined. Their fame in Japan is also illustrated by the fact that they have been copied (with slight variations) by Japanese artists of the Kamakura period, as may be seen in the series of Lohans in Keninji in Kyoto; which are attributed to Ryōzen Kaō. It may be added that the same type returns also in two Lohan pictures in the Boston Museum, which have sometimes been called Japanese, sometimes Chinese of the Ming period.

The most interesting example of the Yüan period Lohans is, however, the picture reproduced in *Kokka*, 337, which, according to the inscription, was executed in the Chih-chêng era (1341–1367). It shows a further development of the same strongly realistic characterization as we noticed in Yen Hui's Lohans, an intensification of the dramatic expression. (Pl. 98.) The hoary old man with white hair and bushy eyebrows is seated in a contracted position in a large chair of tree roots; his enormous hands are lifted and folded as if he were praying or greeting some invisible presence, and his shrunken face is illumined by the glow of a deep and searching spirit. Compared with the Lohans of Kuan-hsiu, he looks almost like an ordinary human being, but at the side of the peaceful Chinese monks, who appeared as Lohans in the Sung period, he is like a hermit consumed by holy fire. Another Lohan picture which may have belonged to the same series belongs to the Museum in Boston (12.884). The man is somewhat younger, but also of foreign race, and he sits in a similar chair of tree roots, holding in his hands a reliquary in the shape of an Indian stupa, while a Chinese official is kneeling at his feet.

Yen Hui's name is traditionally attached to several other pictures in Japanese collections of somewhat varying style and execution. The two imposingly large and powerful Taoist hermits, Ha-ma and T'ieh-kuai, belonging to Chionin, but usually preserved in the museum in Kyoto, are executed in the same fashion as the Lohans with strong brush-lines and a sparing use of colour (*Toyo*, ix, pls. 114–17). Their extraordinary fame may, to no small extent, have been caused by the fact that they have served as models for several painters of the Kano school, who were particularly attracted by the bold and sweeping mannerism of such paintings. (Pl. 99.) The praise bestowed on them, for instance, by Omura could hardly be carried further: "The brush is handled in a mighty and forceful manner, and the work evinces abundant life, while the almost supernatural spirit makes us feel as if we were about to be attacked by some uncanny spirit; they are truly good enough to be called the greatest works of hundreds of generations. Whenever those great artists, Cho Densu, Motonobu, Tanyu and others of our country depicted these two hermits, they always took their models from these pictures."¹ Unfortunately, the

¹ Cf. *Toyo Bijutsu Taikwan*, vol. ix, text p. 33.

said masters were sometimes too prone to substitute boldness of brush-work, size, and effect for artistic significance.

Distinctly superior as works of art are the pictures executed in a floating ink style, akin to that of the Ch'an painters, which are also attributed to Yen Hui, for instance the Taoist Immortals Han-shan and Shih-tê, formerly in the Kawasaki collection in Kobe (*Toyo*, ix, 108, 109), and the meditating Ch'an monk in the Boston Museum. (Pl. 100.) They exhibit brush-work of unusual vigour and more spontaneous expression than the large pictures in Kyoto, though the addition of some white and reddish tones in the Kawasaki pictures reveals a striving for outward effect that hardly stands in harmony with the traditions of Ch'an painting. The meditating monk in Boston is a less pretentious and also less well-preserved painting. The thin washes of ink and colour have completely sunk into the loose texture of the silk, so that the figure has got an almost shadowy appearance. But it is nevertheless powerful and of remarkable concentration in execution as well as in the characterization of the man.

It seems also that not a few of the important Buddhist pictures executed in the Yüan period were free repetitions or imitations of famous originals by T'ang masters whose names are often attached to these pictures. Best known among them is the monumental trinity representing Shākyamuni, Manjuśri, and Samantabhadra in Tōfukuji in Kyoto and the white-robed Avalokiteśvara in Daitokuji (*Kokka*, 179), which were all mentioned in the chapter on Wu Tao-tzū, because they are supposed to reproduce works of the great T'ang master. They belong to the foremost class of Buddhist paintings still preserved not only because of their splendid designs but also by the masterly brush-work. In this respect they may well stand a comparison with Yen Hui's paintings. Another rather important picture, though of Taoist rather than Buddhist import, is the *Chung K'uei* in Marquis Inouye's collection, which is also said to be after Wu Tao-tzū's design, and executed in the Yüan period.¹ The same tradition is attached to the three interesting pictures in the Boston Museum which represent *Taoist Deities of Heaven, of Earth, and of Water*.² They are most unusual compositions, which may have been inspired by some mural paintings by Wu Tao-tzū, but executed in a somewhat dry fashion with more insistence on the ornamental quality of the lines than on their life-movement or rhythmic expression. This kind of work was evidently produced quite abundantly in the Yüan period, and possibly also at the end of the Sung.

There are a number of religious pictures reproducing earlier designs, but executed in the Yüan period; the museum in Boston possesses both Bodhisattvas and Lohans which seem to fit the case, but their artistic merits are generally not very great. Some of them are closely akin to Japanese works of the Kamakura period.³

¹ Reproduced in colour in *Kokka*, 230.

² Cf. *Chinese Paintings in Amer. Collect.*, pls. 95, 96, 97.

³ Cf. *Chinese Paintings in Amer. Coll.*, pls. 98, 148, 158, 179, 186.

Besides this type of painting, based on earlier originals, there were Buddhist pictures of a new hieratic kind in which the Mongol-Tibetan influence becomes apparent. It should be remembered that Kublai Khan called in one of the high Tibetan lamas to serve as head of the official religion in the capital, and encouraged the erection of lama temples with all their paraphernalia of ritual objects and paintings. A special inspector was appointed to control the execution of such "Indian" paintings, as they were called by the Chinese, which now were produced in great quantities. Few of the early ones have been preserved, but their designs have become well known through masses of later repetitions. As this kind of religious painting enjoyed imperial support and recognition, it is natural that it also exercised a certain influence on the artistic activities of the Chinese. The results became sometimes quite successful; some of the hieratic Buddhist pictures of this class are distinguished by unusual decorative beauty and ornamental refinement without being individual works of art in a stricter sense. Excellent examples may be seen in the Boston Museum, to wit, *Buddha seated on a chariot*, drawn by a bullock among stars and constellations, and *Buddha expounding the Law*, surrounded by the Great Bodhisattvas and Devas. (Pl. 101.)¹ They are executed in colour with rich ornamentation of gold, which seems to reflect the abstract beauty of the celestial spheres. It is an art far removed from the world of material illusion, but impressive as the festival hymns chanted by the monks in honour of the cosmic deities.

(3) *Reactionaries and Traditionalists*

The foremost official representative of painting and calligraphy in the reign of Kublai Khan and of his three successors was Chao Mêng-fu, often called by his *tzŭ*, Tzŭ-ang, or by his *hao*, Sung-hsüeh Tao-jên (The Sage of the Pines and the Snow). He made a brilliant official career and became famous; consequently his life and work have been abundantly recorded by Chinese historians, but space does not permit us to include here more than a few relevant points from the Chinese sources.

He was born in 1254 at Hu-chou (Chekiang) as a member of a noble family descending from the first Sung emperor; was educated in the imperial college in Hang-chou and retired into private life on the fall of the Sung dynasty. But a few years later (1286) he, like a score of other scholars, accepted an invitation to appear at the Mongol court, and was soon found to be a very able administrator besides a great painter and calligraphist. Consequently he was appointed Secretary to the Board of War and later on (1316) he was honoured with a high post in the Han-lin college. After his death, in 1322, he received the posthumous title: Duke of Wei. As a character he seems to have been a true model of Confucian virtues: conscientious and dignified, "never indulging in foolish talk or laughing"; as a scholar

¹ Cf. *Chinese Paintings in Amer. Coll.*, pls. 159, 160, 185.

he was distinguished by an extraordinary memory (he recited freely poems which he read but once), great learning and faithful adherence to the time-honoured models of style and good manners. He was in every respect a link with the past, and a prominent representative of the somewhat archæological current in Chinese art, which from now onwards often served as a substitute for fresh ideas.

Chao Mêng-fu wrote himself in late years on one of his early paintings:

"From my youth I loved to paint. Whenever I obtained a bit of silk or a piece of paper, I could not resist grasping the brush and making a drawing. The present picture was made in my early years; it does not reveal great strength of the brush; yet, it has something of the spirit of antiquity. Now my hair and beard have grown white and my manner of painting has evolved, but I have also become indifferent to multifarious matters. My former works I can no longer obtain. Yu-chih wanted me to write a colophon, and therefore I made this record.—Mêng-fu."¹

In a colophon on another picture, Chao Mêng-fu gives still stronger expression to his admiration for the classic models and his adherence to the "spirit of the ancients" (*ku-i*).

"The most important quality in a painting is the spirit of antiquity. If this is not present, the work is not worth much, even though it is skilfully executed. Men of to-day, who know how to paint with a fine brush in a delicate manner and to lay on strong and brilliant colours, consider themselves able painters. They are extremely ignorant, because if the spirit of antiquity is wanting, the works are faulty all through and not worth looking at. My pictures seem to be quite simple and carelessly done, but true connoisseurs will realize that they are very close to the old models and may therefore be considered good. This I tell for the real connoisseurs and not for the ignorant; (dated 1299). Chao Mêng-fu."

Chao Mêng-fu's principal model among the old masters seems to have been Wang Wei and his ideal among the calligraphists Wang Hsi-chih. In fact, he copied several of Wang Wei's pictures, and such compositions of his as the *Chiao and Hua Mountains in Autumn* and the *Village by the Water*, which were executed in colour, are said to have been based directly on the T'ang master. But he was also a specialist in horse-painting and followed in this respect very closely Han Kan and Li Lung-mien. In fact, he considered himself fully equal to the latter:—

"From my early days I liked to paint horses, and I thought that I knew completely their character. My friend Kuo Yu-chih once presented me with a poem, in which he said: 'People always make comparisons between you and Li Lung-mien; they do not realize that you have surpassed Ts'ao Pa and Han Kan.' Now, this way of talking about Ts'ao and Han is exaggerated, but as to the comparison with Li Lung-mien, I have no objection and may well be equal to him."

It seems furthermore that Chao Mêng-fu did not paint horses simply as motives of animal life, but represented them also in a symbolic sense. Such is the interpretation given of his famous picture *Pasturing Horses under Old Trees* (executed in 1301) by a writer who is quoted by Chang Ch'ou: "His intention was to illustrate by the picture the life of officials when they are free from harassing toil and resting their

¹ The quotations from Chao Mêng-fu's writings in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. xi, which contains extensive notes about the painter.

minds like horses without bits, bridles, and harness. . . . When looking at this picture, we may realize that there is a proper time for everything. How can we be like unto them ?”

The horse-paintings attributed to Chao Mêng-fu are legion, and the majority of them are, no doubt, imitations or copies. Of those which have come under my observation, I should particularly like to point out the fragment of a scroll in M. Stoclet's collection in Brussels representing two horses, one reddish, the other black, which are on the point of entering shallow water. It is provided with the artist's signature and the date 1301, which, however, may be later additions. The horses are large Mongolian ponies with strong bodies and short legs, drawn in a style more akin to that of the T'ang painters than resembling the manner of Li Lung-mien or his immediate followers. (Pl. 102.) The other picture in the same collection attributed to Chao Mêng-fu, which represents a man of Tartar type in greenish costume on a black horse, is probably somewhat later in execution, though it may reproduce a design by the master. A variation of the same design—a Mongol hunter on a trotting pony—was in the Collection Doucet in Paris, and is reproduced in colour, as an original work by Chao Mêng-fu, in *Ars Asiatica*, i, pl. 21.

The Palace Museum in Peking possesses a small picture of a man leading three unsaddled horses, which is signed and dated 1310. I know it only by the reproduction of *Ku Kung*, vol. ix; it is evidently of fine quality and may be an original. The same is true of the beautiful scroll in Prince Matsukata's collection representing *Eight Horses* (four of them with riders) which is reproduced in *Kokka*, 435. Less convincing as a personal creation by the master is the small picture in the Metropolitan Museum, which bears the title *Ch'iu Chiao Yin Ma t'u* (Watering Horses on the Autumn Fields) and the date 1312. It is executed in colour, and reproduces an earlier composition by the T'ang painter P'ei K'uan.¹

In the Freer Gallery are several pictures with Chao Mêng-fu's signature. Most interesting as a composition is a short scroll in the *pai miao* manner, which represents fifteen unsaddled horses, three of them with grooms on their backs, crossing a river. (Pl. 103.) The picture has passed through famous collections such as Hsiang Mo-lin's, Ch'ien Lung's, etc., in which it was accepted as an original, but it is now classified as probably of the early Ming period. The execution does not quite support the verdict of the master's seal and signature, but if not an original, it must be an early and very faithful copy.²

A more unusual picture is the short scroll in the Freer Gallery, which represents *A Goat and a Sheep*. It has also passed through the collections of Hsiang Mo-lin and Ch'ien Lung, and the latter has provided it not only with seals but also with a poetic inscription. (Pl. 104.) The other inscription on the picture is signed by

¹ Cf. Ferguson, op. cit., 140.

² The same museum possesses a short scroll of *Eight Horses*, one of them with a rider, the other playing about without trappings or saddles, which is a work of the Yüan period, “of great interest and technical proficiency,” but now in a somewhat darkened condition, which makes it difficult to reach a definite opinion about its origin. Cf. *Chinese Paint. in Amer. Collect.*, pls. 126, 127.

Chao Mêng-fu himself, and runs as follows: "I often paint horses and very seldom sheep. When Chung-hsin asked me to paint, I amused myself in making a picture from life, and though I could not equal the men of old, it contains real spirit-harmony (*ch'i-yün*). Tzŭ-ang." The artist's claim is particularly true in regard to the grazing goat, which is a very intimate study from life; the sheep is a more extraordinary creature, but such fat woolly sheep were cultivated and admired as perfections of their kind, and Chao Mêng-fu represented it, no doubt, true to life.

Another interesting picture by Chao Mêng-fu, known in two or more repetitions is *The Starved Horse*, a gaunt animal on exceedingly high and thin legs grazing at the side of a tall pine-tree. The replica in the Del Drago collection was, according to inscription, executed by Chao Mêng-fu's wife, Kuan Tao-shêng, in 1321, after the original of her husband. (Pl. 105.) The beautifully balanced composition is rendered with great refinement; it seems as if the womanly painter had felt a deep sympathy for the poor horse. She has brought out the sickly character of the animal with remarkable sensitiveness, and emphasized in a striking fashion the contrast between the weak horse and the strong tree.

The National Museum in Peking possesses at least five pictures with the seals and signatures of Chao Mêng-fu, i.e. three horizontal scrolls (*chüan*) representing landscapes, one of which with grazing horses, and two large hanging scrolls (*chou*), known as *King T'ang summoning Yin*, and *A Bamboo Garden with murmuring Water*. Only two of the *chüan* came under my observation, but they were both of doubtful authenticity; of the two hanging pictures the more important is the large illustration to the history of the Shang (Yin) dynasty (dated 1309), which is executed with bright colours in a style that is even more old-fashioned than the manners of most of the Sung painters, but the *ku-i* of Chao Mêng-fu's painting is a purely formal quality that conveys very little of the spirit and expression of pre-Sung art.

A most interesting example of Chao Mêng-fu's dependence on earlier models is the picture in the Palace Museum, which represents *A Poetical Gathering in the Western Garden* in a form that cannot be very far removed from Li Lung-mien's famous rendering of the same subject. (Pl. 106.) The description of Li Lung-mien's picture by Mi Fei corresponds in all its main points to Chao Mêng-fu's representation, though there may be some slight difference in the arrangement of the scenery and the number of the assistant figures. Kuo Yu-chih points out in his inscription on the picture that varying copies existed of Li Lung-mien's painting (some in ink only, some in colour), but that this was the most refined and admirable rendering of the famous original. It is provided with Chao Mêng-fu's seal and signature.¹

¹ Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. ii. On silk, size: 5 ft. 4 in. by 2 ft. 1 in. Among other examples of Chao Mêng-fu's close adherence to models of the T'ang period may be quoted the picture of *Ambulating Tea-vendors*, reproduced in the *Tokyo Exhib. Catalogue*, pl. 141. It is difficult to say whether this picture actually was painted by Chao Mêng-fu, but he may well have done it, utilizing a composition by Yen Li-pên, as pointed out by Dr. Speiser in an article in *Ostasiat. Zeitschr.*, vi, 1931. The same composition was also reproduced, with some modifications, by Ch'ien Hsüan, as may be seen in the picture now in Mr. Abe Fusajiro's collection.

Chao Mêng-fu's profound reverence for the spirit of antiquity and the old masters led him, no doubt, time and again to reproduce more or less faithfully earlier designs, figures as well as landscapes. We have already referred to his copies after Wang Wei; none of them seems to be preserved in the original, but the picture in the British Museum (dated 1309, and signed Tzŭ-ang) must be a faithful copy after Chao Mêng-fu's interpretation of Wang Wei's *Wang-ch'uan*-scroll.¹ It was not through originality of invention or new ideas that Chao Mêng-fu acquired his great fame as a painter, but rather through his faithful insistence on classical traditions and great technical proficiency.

Chao Mêng-fu's position in the foremost rank of Chinese artists after the Sung period depends furthermore on his prominence as a calligraphist as much as on his merits as a painter. No writer of later times has surpassed him, according to traditional Chinese estimate, and specimens of his handwriting are still treasured as highly as his paintings; many of them have been engraved on stone tablets or otherwise reproduced.

He is said to have been equally skilled in every kind of calligraphy, be it "seal characters", "model style", or "running hand", but his small model style (*hsiao k'ai*) aroused the greatest admiration among connoisseurs. It was "delicate, beautiful, well balanced, and harmonious" says Chang Ch'ou, "like the character of the man." But when the same critic in another connection says, that when he saw a calligraphic specimen by Chao Mêng-fu, "it was like flowers dancing in the breeze or clouds rising before the eyes," he may rather refer to some writing in "running hand" (grass characters). In spite of all his versatility as a calligraphist, Chao Mêng-fu did not, however, succeed in imitating perfectly Mi Fei's writing. He tried in vain to fill out some missing lines in a scroll by the great Sung master, and found it finally necessary to use a rubbing from an engraved copy of the same text. The reason was probably that Chao Tzŭ-ang lacked something of the spontaneous energy and decision that ensoiled the brush-strokes of Mi Fei, a defect, which also is indicated in the following lines by Chang Ch'ou:—

"Tzŭ-ang's style of writing was very gentle, elegant, and harmonious. He was a follower of the real Wang Hsi-chih school. It was, indeed, too beautiful, too gentle and seductive, because it lacked the spirit of men who cannot be forced to desert their principles, as for instance, Wên T'ien-hsiang, whose style was clear, penetrating, straight and inspiring. The works of his which are still preserved, such as the Six Songs, arouse more love than respect."

The inference of the difference between Chao Mêng-fu, who went into the service of the foreign rulers, and Wên T'ien-hsiang, the faithful patriot, who preferred death to the honours offered him by Kublai Khan, if he would swear allegiance to the Mongol house, reflects the true Chinese point of view. Chao Mêng-fu may have been ever so skilful as a painter and a calligraphist, and a most able and upright official; yet, he could never become the ideal of the true scholars,

¹ Cf. L. Binyon, *A Landscape by Chao Mêng-fu*; *T'oung Pao*, 1905, i.

or grow into the heart of the people, because he had submitted to foreign conquerors and chosen the easier path, which led to fame and success, but not to the shining glory of unyielding patriots.

Chao Mêng-fu used to say with some pride: "Every member of my family is a skilful painter and calligraphist." This applied particularly to his wife, Kuan Tao-shêng, *tzŭ*, Chung-chi (1262–1319), who was much appreciated as a painter of bamboos and plum-blossoms, and to his son Chao Yung, *tzŭ*, Chung-mu (born 1289), who continued the traditions of his father, painting horses, hunters, birds, and buffaloes. Most of the pictures attributed to Chao Yung look like weaker editions of Chao Mêng-fu's works; yet, there is at least one remarkable exception: the large picture belonging to Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto which represents *A Flock of Herons gathered about a Snow-covered Willow Tree*, a composition of outstanding decorative effect, elegant in design and charming in colour. (*Toyo*, ix, pl. 99.) If this picture is a work by Chao Yung, as claimed by tradition, he must have been a bird-painter of high class, a forerunner of Lü Chi and other specialists in bird-painting in the Ming period. The picture stands much closer to the works of these later men than to any bird-paintings of the Sung period, and may perhaps thus be quoted as an example of the new ideals of style and technique, which became manifest at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Another very effective picture of a similar type, representing *A White Heron on a Willow Trunk*, is in the Kawanishi collection, and has also sometimes been ascribed to Chao Yung (*Sogen-meigwashu*, pl. 55).

Kuan Tao-shêng or Kuan Fu-jên, as the wife of Chao Mêng-fu usually was called, painted exclusively orchids and bamboo in monochrome ink (beside copies of her husband's works). Excellent specimens of her bamboo-paintings are preserved in the Palace Museum in Peking,¹ in Boston,² and in Marquis Tokugawa's collection.³ The designs are usually quite thin and slender; not clusters or groves of bamboo, but single stalks with relatively sparse leaves, and they are interpreted with a great deal of tenderness and grace. The feminine touch in the pictures of Kuan Fu-jên is unmistakable and contributes to make them interesting, though not very important, works of art. Her pictures have always been highly appreciated by the Chinese for their elegant brushwork: "For an inch of silk or a slip of paper (of her work) people would vie in offering large sums. Later students took her pictures as models."⁴ She left also a written record about bamboo painting.

Ch'ien Hsüan was like Chao Mêng-fu, a survivor of the Sung period; in fact, he was twenty years older than Tzŭ-ang. He had thus spent the best part of his life under the old regime, and remained faithful to its traditions by personal sympathies as well as by the general character of his art. He was born in 1235, passed his *chin shih* degree in 1260, and became known under several more or less fanciful names:

¹ Cf. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. xii.

³ *Tokyo Exhib. Catalogue*, pl. 142.

² *Chinese Paint. in Amer. Collect.*, pl. 125.

⁴ Cf. Giles, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

Shun-chü, Yü-t'an (Jade Pool), Sun-fêng (Peaceful Peak), Ch'ing-ch'ü, Hsi-lan-wêng, Cha-ch'uan-wêng (after his birthplace near Wu-hsing), etc. Like Chao Mêng-fu he was counted among "the Eight Scholars of Wu-hsing"; but instead of paying allegiance to the Mongol dynasty, he retired into a country abode and spent the later years of his life as a wandering poet and painter, drowning his sorrows in wine. "When Shun-chü was quite drunk, he could not even paint, but when only a little tipsy, his mind and hand were attuned, and he would work with great enjoyment without taking much trouble to finish things thoroughly."¹ He gave away his pictures to collectors and connoisseurs as soon as they were done, and many satisfied themselves with imitations when the demand for his works became larger than the supply.

Most of the pictures which nowadays pass under Ch'ien Hsüan's name represent plants and insects, painted according to the Chao Ch'ang-tradition with great refinement and intimacy. The same qualities are also apparent in his figure paintings, which were done after the fashion of Li Lung-mien, and in his landscapes, for which Chao Ta-nien's works served as models, even though they hardly reach the level of his flower paintings. Most of them are, no doubt, copies.

One of the finest examples of his work known to me is the scroll in the Detroit Institute of Fine Arts, which represents a great variety of insects among shrubs and plants, and everything is here defined with an exactness which shows the trained eye of the naturalist. (Pls. 107, 108.)

"Three libelluline dragon-flies, one red, one brown, one silvery grey, hover around and attack a swarm of midges. Below them on a brown and ragged lotus-leaf are three green frogs. An almost imperceptible transition brings us to dry land and amidst the herbage we find a green grasshopper venturing out upon a swaying spear of grass, a bee-fly pursuing his solitary course, and another dragon-fly, this time in black. A fat green katydid climbs speculatively over the leaves, and above it a long-horned beetle rests for a moment. Two large female cone-headed grasshoppers display green and brown colour-phases, while the smaller brown male appears relatively insignificant in the background."²

To this graphic description of the charming picture may be added that it is not only the most exact illustration to the life of the insects, but also a record of the transparent light and subdued colour harmony of an early autumn day in Southern China.

Several minor pictures in the shape of fans or album leaves in Japanese collections are ascribed to Ch'ien Hsüan. They represent branches of flowering trees with birds, or plants and insects; for instance: *Plum-blossoms and Birds* (Count Sakai), *Pomegranate and Birds* (Marquis Kuroda),³ *A Crab and a Radish* (Mr. Murayama),⁴ *Rats Feeding on a Melon* (Marquis Kuroda),⁵ *A Stalk of Cocks-comb* (Hompōji temple).⁶ Similar to these is the picture, in the form of a small hanging scroll, in the

¹ Quoted from *Hsü Chien Pai Yün I Kao* in *Shu Hua Fang*; also in *Sung Yuan i-lai*.

² Benjamin March, *Early Autumn*, in *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Fine Arts*, March, 1929.

³ Reproduced: *Toyo*, ix, pls. 100, 101.

⁴ Repr. *Kokka*, 259.

⁵ Repr. *Kokka*, 169.

⁶ Repr. *Kokka*, 163.

National Museum in Peking representing *A Cucumber with Flowers and Fruits*, but which, in spite of seals and inscription, makes the impression of a copy rather than an original by the master. Nor does the highly coloured scroll in the Freer Gallery with *Blossoming Plants, Birds, and Butterflies* possess the lightness and subtlety of Ch'ien Hsüan's best authenticated paintings.¹ It may be of the period, though by some man who was more dependent on the Sung academy tradition.

A far more interesting and original work is the fully-signed painting in the Palace Museum, in which Ch'ien Hsüan has represented a lichee-tree (*Nephelium litchi*) mainly by its trunk.² The very tall and narrow picture consists of the bare pillar-like trunk finished with a squarely trimmed small section of the leafy crown. The painter has contrived to give a convincing impression of the structure and height of the tree in a beautifully simplified decorative form.

The figure paintings by Ch'ien Hsüan are mostly illustrations to classical legends or imaginative portraits and the like inspired by models of the T'ang and Northern Sung period. The figures are often placed against a neutral background, without any indication of a stage or scenery, and executed with a pointed brush in fine outline, to which some light colouring may be added. They are works of a pure traditionalist; yet, with a definite personal character, unusual refinement, and sometimes a touch of humour. This may be seen, for instance, in his rendering of the popular motive: *The Brushing of the White Elephant*, known to us through the compositions of Chang Sêng-yu and Yen Li-pên. Chien Hsüan's picture which exists at least in two replicas (the better one formerly in the Tuan Fang collection, cf. *Kokka*, 259; the second copy in the National Museum in Peking) is evidently based on T'ang designs, but he has simplified them (using only the figures) with an exceedingly light and delicate brush. The same seems to be true of his other translations of earlier compositions, as for instance, *The Emperor Sung T'ai Tsu playing Football* with some courtiers,³ or *Lu T'ung-pêng drinking Tea*, which, according to inscription, is painted after an original by Liu Sung-nien.⁴ Other very delicate pictures executed on a small scale in *pai miao* manner, with slight addition of colour, ascribed to the artist represent *T'ao Yüan-ming* walking briskly in a fluttering long robe followed by a servant who carries a large wine-pot⁵; or *The Emperor Ming Huang teaching Yang Kuei-fei to play the Flute*, a rather amusing composition known through a picture in the National Museum in Peking, which may be a very careful copy (Pl. 109), or the delicate little picture of the famous flute-player (and general) *Huan I* of the fourth century, known through

¹ Repr. *Chinese Paint. in Amer. Collect.*, pl. 128.

² Repr. *Ku Kung*, vol. viii; size: 4 ft. 8 in. by 1 ft. 1 in. Slightly coloured. Mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

³ Belonging to Mr. Eiki Takenouchi. According to inscript. a copy after an earlier original. Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Catalogue*, pl. 147.

⁴ In the Palace Museum in Peking. *Ku Kung*, vol. iii. A hanging scroll, 4 ft. by 1 ft. According to inscript. by Ch'ien Lung, the picture is based on earlier renderings of the same subject by Liu Sung-nien and Mao I, which, however, were horizontal scrolls.

⁵ Belonging to Mr. Kuan Mien-chün. Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Catalogue*, pl. 145.

numerous reproductions.¹ Flute-playing may, indeed, have been an occupation particularly suited to the sensitive nature of Chien Hsüan; his art has something of the same softness and delicacy as the sound of a bamboo-flute when played by a solitary musician at Su-chou.

Another prominent contemporary painter of flowers and birds, who "imitated antiquity without being enslaved to it", was Wang Yüan, *tzü*, Jo-shui, *hao*, Tan-hsüan. His name has become very popular and is attached to a great number of very pleasant and often highly coloured paintings representing mostly flowering trees and shrubs with birds. His ideal among the old masters is said to have been Huang Ch'üan of the Five Dynasties period, but his minor pictures are rather like those of Chao Ch'ang, and his landscapes were painted in the style of Kuo Hsi. A large picture of his representing *A Pair of Ducks among Reeds on a Snowy Shore*, is in the Palace Museum.² The composition is quite traditional; the birds are painted with perfect naturalism in colour. The pictures attributed to him, with more or less reason, in Japanese collections, may be divided into two classes, i.e. small fan-paintings and album leaves, and larger decorative compositions. Among the former may be mentioned *A Dragon-Fly on a Pea-Vine* (Marquis Kuroda, *Kokka*, 157); *A Branch of Wild Camelia* (K. Magoshi, *Kokka*, 173); *Torn Leaves of Lotus and Magpies* (Marquis Kuroda, *Toyo*, ix, pl. 106); among the latter: *Pheasant, Bamboo, and Rose-Mallows* (Shōkokuji, *Select. Rel.*, xi), *White Pheasant and Rose-Mallows* (Kawasaki collection, *Kokka*, 337), etc. The decorative beauty of his works is often very fine, but it depends more on the colouring than on the designs and can thus hardly be appreciated in reproductions. (Pl. 110.) His landscapes are said to have been of the same romantic type as those by his learned colleague Chu Tê-jun, but as far as I know, none of them has been identified.

Kung K'ai, *tzü*, Shêng-yü, *hao*, Ts'ui-yen, was another of the proud artists who survived from the Sung period and who did not enter the service of the Mongols. He must, however, have been still active at the beginning of the fourteenth century, because T'ang Hou, who wrote his *Hua Chien* about this time, gives the following vivid characterization of the painter:—

"Mr. Kung Shêng-yü, who is an eight feet tall man with a beautiful beard and a great scholar and calligraphist, paints nowadays horses in the manner of Ts'ao Pa, and he gives the real spirit of the horses. But his brush-work is rather coarse, which is a defect. In his figure paintings he also follows Ts'ao and Han Kan, but in landscape painting he imitates Mi Yüan-hui. His plum-blossoms and chrysanthemums are also made after the model of old pictures. The poems and colophons which he writes on his pictures are often quite strange and original. Once he painted *A Starved Horse* and wrote a poem on it . . . in which he asked: 'Is there nobody who pities my bare-bone horse which stands in the setting sun and throws a shadow like a mountain?' "

Kung K'ai's picture of the Starved Horse is now in the collection of Mr. Abe

¹ In private possession in Japan. Repr. *Kokka*, 66, in the *Imper. Jap. Government Railways Guide for China* and elsewhere. For Huan I's biography see Giles, 839.

² *Ku Kung*, vol. xvi. Painted in colours on silk; mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

Fusajiro.¹ It is executed in monochrome ink on paper without any indication of scenery, a background or a setting sun (contrary to what may be expected from the inscription), but is nevertheless a very expressive, not to say touching, representation, more significant as a work of art than many of the horse-paintings attributed to Chao Mêng-fu. The artist's inscription is written in archaic characters, and besides this there are at least a dozen colophons by later men confirming the fame of the picture.

Kung K'ai was evidently a man of great imagination and originality. He loved to paint devils and goblins, sometimes in combination with their great enemy, Chung K'uei, as may be seen in a rather humorous picture in the National Museum in Peking, and fishermen in their boats, enjoying the perfect bliss of a good nap. A picture of this type in the Freer Gallery is traditionally attributed to Kung K'ai. (Pl. 111.) Most of the subjects he represented seem to indicate that the artistic occupation became to him, as to so many others of these men, a means of escape from the actual world to happier realms of the imagination. An example of his impressionistic landscapes, in the style of the two Mi, is reproduced in *Toyo*, ix, pl. 97 (belonging to Mr. T. Namba in Takamatsu). It belongs to a class of painting that became much in vogue during the Yüan period, though it is more closely dependent on the works of Mi Fei than the landscapes by the great masters to whom we will return in the next chapter.

Liu Kuan-tao, *tzü*, Chung-hsien, was a famous painter of Taoist and Buddhist figures, besides birds, animals, flowers, bamboos, and landscapes in the style of Kuo Hsi. He is said to have combined the merits of various old masters and was consequently greatly admired. In 1339 he painted the portrait of the emperor, and received the very fitting recompense of a charge in the Bureau of the Imperial Wardrobe. A rather important large mountain view by Liu Kuan-tao, quite in the manner of Kuo Hsi, is in the Palace Museum in Peking, and another *Landscape with three Poets* and a servant carrying their *ch'in* in the Freer Gallery.² (Pl. 112.) The composition is a close imitation after Liu Sung-nien, or some kindred master, skilfully done, though without the intrinsic refinement and significance that ennobles the works of the Sung painters. His extraordinary versatility is furthermore illustrated by the picture in the Palace Museum representing *Two Lohans under a Palm Tree*, signed and dated 1356, which is executed in pure *pai miao* style, like certain works by Li Lung-mien.³

A highly talented painter, who also painted his landscapes in the heroic style of Kuo Hsi, was Chu Tê-jun, *tzü*, Tsê-min. He was a learned man, prominent as calligraphist and poet, who after he had been introduced by Chao Mêng-fu at the Mongol court, was honoured with high official positions. We are told that his calligraphies were in the style of Wang Hsi-chih, his poems in the manner of Li-po,

¹ Cf. *Soraikwan Kinsho*, pl. 18.

² *Chinese Paint. in Amer. Collect.*, pl. 152.

³ Repr. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vi. Size: 2 ft. 1 in. by 1 ft. 7 in.

and his landscapes like Kuo Hsi's. He retired from official life, because he wished "to drink of the Three Rivers and eat the gentian of the Wu Mountains", i.e. live peacefully in the rich nature of Chekiang. Two important pictures of his are preserved in the Palace Museum in Peking, i.e. *High Mountains and a Stream in Snow*¹ and *Ch'in-players under high Firs on a River-bank*.² Both are works of great technical refinement executed in the style of the Northern Sung period, and particularly the former shows his dependence on Kuo Hsi.

T'ang Ti, *tzŭ*, Tzŭ-hua, was another Confucian scholar of great learning and refinement who entered the government service on the recommendation of Chao Mêng-fu, his master and model in art. His landscape in the Palace Museum, which represents *A Winding River with a Boat between Rocky Shores in Mist*,³ is a free transposition of similar things from the Sung period, done in a brush-manner of the same clean and careful type as we know from the paintings of Chao Mêng-fu.

The list of painters, who may be classified as traditionalists, could easily be prolonged by a number of names, but space does not permit us to give it in full; only one or two more may still be added, because they are known through a number of original works in Japanese collections. Jên Jên-fa, *tzŭ*, Tzŭ-ming, *hao*, Yüeh-shan, made his career in the government service as an expert on waterworks, and wrote a treatise on this subject called *Shui Li Shu*. His speciality as a painter was horses, which he painted after the best models of the T'ang dynasty, as may be seen in the very fine pictures belonging to Marquis Asano and to Mr. Murakami.⁴ No less traditional are the large landscapes with figures in the Tokyo Art Academy,⁵ and the pictures in the Kawasaki collection,⁶ which represent garden pavilions combined with pine-trees and bamboo groves. (Pl. 113.) Here the dependence on the Ma Yüan-school is most striking. The same relationship is also evident in several works by Sun Chün-tsê, whose landscapes with mountain terraces, pavilions, and tall pine-trees in Baron Iwasaki's collection,⁷ in Yotokuin (Kyoto),⁸ and in Viscount Akimoto's collection⁹ are obvious imitations of Ma Yüan's compositions. If the old attributions did not exist, they would perhaps have passed as Sung paintings of the Ma-school like so many similar things without names.

(4) *The Great Landscape Painters*

The new æsthetic ideas of the Yüan period found their expression particularly in landscape painting and, to some extent, also in paintings of bamboo and plum-blossoms. The greatest artistic geniuses devoted themselves almost exclusively to

¹ *Ku Kung*, vol. vii. Size: 4 ft. 5 in. by 2 ft. 7 in.

² *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. xii. Size: 3 ft. 8 in. by 1 ft. 8 in. Mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

³ *Ku Kung*, vol. vi. Size: 4 ft. 1 in. by 2 ft. 7 in. Signed.

⁴ *Kokka*, 403, 412.

⁵ *Kokka*, 53, 67. *Toyo*, ix, pls. 108, 109.

⁶ *Kokka*, 321. Other examples of Jên Jên-fa reproduced in *Kokka*, 323, and in the *Tokyo Exhibition Catalogue*, pls. 153-7.

⁷ *Kokka*, 249.

⁸ *Kokka*, 191.

⁹ *Kokka*, 328. Other examples of Sun Chün-tsê reproduced in *Kokka*, 282. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pls. 190, 191.

these specialities and created, each in his field, fresh and original works of art which have little in common with the ideals of the Southern Sung period. Their art is a very intimate expression for their individual temperaments, and they painted more than ever for their own pleasure, inspired by their love of nature and of brush-work. It may be that most of the great painters in China have followed this path; yet, the academicians of the Sung period were, after all, professional artists, who made many of their works on the command of emperors and collectors and whose more or less calligraphic styles and compositional methods often verged on mannerism.

The great landscape painters of the Yüan period are remarkably free from the calligraphic element, their brush-work is more purely pictorial. They use ink as impressionistic painters use colours, it becomes a medium for creating colouristic effects, space, and atmosphere by contrasts of light and shade and is rarely used as line for the definition of form. Most of them seem to have sketched directly from nature, and they elaborated less than their predecessors the things they had seen and recorded in their sketches. The paintings of some of these men, like Kao K'o-kung, Ni Tsan, and Wu Chên, represent a kind of plein-airism, or at least a movement in this direction.

All these landscape painters were in later times classified as of the "Southern School". They were said to continue the traditions of Tung Yüan, Chü-jan, and Mi Fei, but the connection is more a matter of technical methods than of æsthetic ideals, a fact which is usually expressed in Chinese chronicles by the often recurring phrase: "he followed the manner of Tung Yüan and Chü-jan, but later on, when growing older, he formed a school (or manner) of his own." Each one of these painters formed, as a matter of fact, a very characteristic style of his own; they may all be classified as romantics or as impressionists, from a technical point of view, but their individual temperaments are reflected in different modes of expression.

Ni Tsan, who himself was one of the greatest landscape painters of this age, gave the following characterization of the four masters whom he considered most important:—

"Among the painters of mountains, forests, water, and rocks there is president Kao (K'o-kung), whose spirit-harmony (ch'i-yün) is restful and easy, Chao Jung-lu (Mêng-fu), whose brush-work is lofty and distinct, Huang Tzū-chiu (Kung-wang), whose manner is surpassingly easy (free), and Wang Shu-ming, whose style is elegant, luminous, and clear. Everyone of them is of his own class and quite different, but I admire them all and have no criticism to offer. I do not know anybody who would be their superior."¹

The oldest and, according to some of the critics, foremost among these landscape painters was Kao K'o-kung, *tzü*, Yen-ching, *hao*, Fang-shan. His ancestors had immigrated from Central Asia (Hsi-yü); at the time of his birth the family

¹ *Ch'ing Pi Ko I Kao*, quoted in *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 54.

lived at Ta-t'ung in Shansi. He received a classical education, entered the government service under Kublai Khan; became in 1275 an official in the Board of Works, and rose some time afterwards to president of the Board of Justice. This important charge does not seem, however, to have kept him in the capital; he passed most of his later years in Hang-chou, where

"he rented a house. In his leisure hours he took his stick, a bottle of wine, and a book of poetry and went out to the banks of the Ch'ien-t'ang River. Here he sat down looking at the hills and mountains of Chekiang, studying the ever-shifting movements of the clouds and mists. When not occupied with official business or literary writing, he took up the brush to express in painting the thoughts of his heart."¹

Ni Tsan, who wrote the above remarks, calls Kao K'o-kung "a pure and most unusual man, outshining the vulgar world", and other critics praise him in similar terms of intense admiration. Such paintings of his as *Autumn Mountains in Evening Mist*, and *The Mountain Village of the Recluses*, or *The Mountain at Night*, were provided with long rows of poetic inscriptions. The first is well described in the following lines by Ni Tsan: "White clouds; a solitary crane. Evening draws near; a boat at anchor on the Ch'ien-t'ang River, guarded by the mountains of Yüeh (Chekiang). A most precious thing of this age. When I unroll it again, at the northern window, I chant poems and compose verses" (dated 1299).²

The Mountain Village was an improvisation (like many of Kao's works) made by the president in 1297 for his friend Chang Yüan-fu, while they were drinking wine together, and it was said to have been "brilliant, overflowing with life, free from the mannerisms of common artists". *The Night-Mountain* was no less remarkable; it had thirty colophons, among which one by Chang Ch'ou, who said: "President Kao followed first Tung Yüan and Chü-jan, but when he reached middle-age he studied only the two Mi, modifying their manner to a style of his own." And elsewhere the same critic wrote: "Among thousands of ancient and modern painters there are only the two Mi, Kao and Ni Tsan, whose works are really spontaneous and of the highest class. They are truly marvellous and cannot be copied"³—a verdict which has been accepted and repeated by Chinese critics of later times.

Three characteristic pictures by the master may still be seen in the Palace Museum, all representing mountains enveloped by clouds and mist. One of them is called *Spring Clouds and Morning Mist*,⁴ another *The Cloud-encircled Luxurious Mountain*,⁵ the third is *Mountain in Rain*.⁶ The composition is practically the same in the first two; its main element is a big, bulging, over-grown mountain-cone, which rises through a layer of white mist, and a water-course in the foreground between low banks with leafy trees. But the mountains are not split and creviced

¹ Cf. *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. xi.

² *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*.

³ *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. xi.

⁴ *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. xiii, size: 4 ft. 3 in. by 1 ft. 8 in., slightly coloured. Mentioned in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

⁵ *Ko Kung*, vol. xi. Size: 5 ft. 6 in. by 3 ft. 3 in. Slightly coloured. With writings by Têng Wên-yüan, Li K'an, Ch'ien-lung and others; also in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

⁶ *Ku Kung*, vol. vii, size: 3 ft. 8 in. by 2 ft. 5 in., writing by Ch'ien-lung; also in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

or sharply silhouetted as in Kuo Hsi's or Ma Yüan's works; they are rounded and covered by dense vegetation, which is treated not in detail, but as soft masses of light and shade. The *sfumato* of the brush-work suggests the freshness of the vegetation and the warm moist air. The beauty of the pictures depends mainly on the handling of the ink, to which some colour has been added to make it more brilliant.

The third landscape is a pure ink-painting executed in a very free impressionistic fashion with splashes of gleaming dark ink against the vaporous white mist. (Pl. 114.) The earth is steaming after rain, only the top of the mountain and a dark cluster of trees in the foreground stand out through the haze; the rest is an indefinite play of mist and half-hidden shapes rendered in a similar fashion as in the works of the foremost Ch'an painters, though with stronger colouristic accents and more definite suggestion of form and space.

Closely related in style to the most spontaneous works of Kao K'o-kung are the landscape paintings in Japanese collections which are traditionally ascribed to a painter called Kao Jan-hui, a name reported by Soami in *Kundaikwan*, but unknown in the Chinese chronicles. The supposition lies near at hand that it may be another appellation for the same man, though it seems, on the other hand, hardly possible that such a well-known and famous man as Kao K'o-kung would not have been known under his right name in Japan. However this may be, it is evident that the landscapes ascribed to Kao Jan-hui are of the same type as those mentioned above, though perhaps still more sketchy, executed as they are in broad masses of light and shade with floating ink. They are well known through repeated reproductions¹: *A Winter- and A Summer Mountain* in Konchi-in (Kyoto) (Pl. 115), *A Spring- and A Summer Mountain* in the collection of Count Sakai, and *A Summer Mountain* in the collection of Viscount Akimoto. Particularly the two pictures in Count Sakai's collection are of a quality fully comparable to that of Kao K'o-kung's above-mentioned *Mountain in Rain*; the moist atmosphere and the luminous freshness of the trees and shrubs are rendered in the same brilliant fashion with broad splashes of ink.

Huang Kung-wang was a little younger than Kao K'o-kung, but his fame as a painter became almost equally great. He was born in 1269 at Ch'ang-shu (Kiangsu) when his father was 90 years old (?), and received therefore the name Kung-wang Tzū-chiu (Father's long time hoped-for son), but he called himself also: I-fêng (Single Peak) and Ta-ch'ih (Big Fool). He was a brilliant child, and became thoroughly versed in every kind of historical and philosophical studies; "there was nothing he did not understand."² As a result of this great interest in learning he established the "Hall of the Three Religious" in Su-chou, but retired later on to the Fu-ch'un mountains, where he lived in solitude as a Taoist to the age of 85.

¹ Reproduced in *Toyo*, ix, pls. 102-6. *Kokka*, 211, 157.

² The biographical data re Huang Kung-wang are given in *Hua Shih Hui Yao* and *T'u Hui Pao Chien*. Cf. *Shu Hu P'u*, vol. 54.

"He wandered about with paper and brush in his sleeve, and when he came to some beautiful scenery he instantly took down a record of it . . . He examined intensively the changing effects of morning and evening over the mountains and the light and shade of the four seasons, storing them all in his mind and expressing them with his brush. And so he painted the thousand hills and ten-thousand valleys, more and more wonderful the longer he continued; peaks upon peaks and cliffs upon cliffs ever deeper, ever more wonderful. He used more of the thin purple colour than of green and blue and watery ink. He learned from Tung Yüan, but surpassed by far his model."

According to Chang Ch'ou, Huang Kung-wang worked in two different manners: Sometimes he painted with a light purplish colour, drawing the mountain peaks and rocky ledges with a firm and strong brush, but at other times he used diluted ink and sketched the mountains very freely without any folds or wrinkles. The same critic says about his *Luxuriant Spring Mountain* that it was "a pure, genuine, exceedingly fine and detailed work yet, simple and well-balanced; altogether superior to Chao Mêng-fu's pictures. Ni Tsan said: 'Though Huang Tzū-chiu could not dream of reaching President Kao's *Sea-gulls and Waves*, yet, no painter of the present age is equal to him.' Is there any other man of the Yüan dynasty who could do as well and give such profound enjoyment to the beholder?"

It would require too much space to quote more of the old historians about Huang Kung-wang's art; they are all unanimous in representing him as one of those truly great masters whose creative faculty grew in depth and strength the longer he lived. In his old age "he reached the very essence of things, which is not the case of ordinary painters".

The works by Huang Kung-wang in private collections in China and Japan, which have become known through reproductions, are hardly sufficient for an appreciation of the painter's full significance. None of them is of outstanding importance; yet, they are all interesting and often far developed in a formal sense. A rather peculiar design is the horizontal scroll belonging to Mr. Wang Hêng-yung in Peking, known as *Endless Autumn Mountains*, because the whole lower edge is cut out into a row of teeth-like formations, and it is hard to tell whether this is simply a *pleasanterie* or some allusion to the painter's ideas about the formation of the interior of the soil. The landscape itself is a rather crowded composition of wooded hills, mountain peaks, terraces, huts, hollow-ways, trees of many types, etc., brought together in such abundance that it requires some effort on the part of the beholder to see it in every part.¹ The thoughts of the painter seem to float with the impetuous speed of a big torrent; he has hardly time to develop and express them completely, though his manner of painting is speedy and fluent. A still more interesting work of his is the so-called *Chih Lan Shih t'u*, the Abode of Friendship or Epidendrum (which is the symbol of friendship),² a small picture executed in a very clever and original fashion with lightly sketched mountains in soft greyish tone, and strongly dotted trees laid in with some quick horizontal and vertical touches of the brush. (Pl. 116.) The virtuosity of the technical execution reminds us of certain works by Shih-t'ao or other equally far-developed expressionistic

¹ Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 168.

² Probably in the Ex-Imperial Manchu Household Collection, known to me only through a photograph acquired in Peking.

painters from the end of the Ming period. The whole thing is surprisingly modern, and may well serve as an illustration of the new development in monochrome ink-painting due to Huang Kung-wang and the other great landscape painters of this period.

Other pictures by the master such as the *Mountain Village in Evening Mist*, which is signed and dated 1343 (belonging to Mr. P'ang Yüan-chi in Shanghai) (Pl. 117), and the *Autumn Mountain* in Mr. Yamamoto's collection,¹ which is signed and dated 1353, are less vibrant with contrasts of light and shade, but also very effective and original specimens of brilliant brush-work. Particularly, the former is remarkable for the easy sweeping movement of the brush, which follows the forms of the undulating hills and the slopes of riverbanks as naturally as the wind that raises the dust. Huang Kung-wang must have felt the joy of painting and of pouring forth his creative imagination in brush-strokes no less telling and significant than those of Cézanne.

The often recurring comparison between Huang Kung-wang and Mi Fei is a rather limping argument; the two men painted in quite different manners, although both applied the ink impressionistically. Huang Kung-wang had a stroke or a touch of his own, which nobody either before or after him quite reached. "He played with the brush and the ink and felt intensely happy in his work. His greatest interests were not those pursued by the men of his time. Is there anybody to-day who understands them?"—asks P'an Ch'un, a contemporary critic.²

The short treatise which he composed under the title: *Nine Rules for Painting Landscapes, Trees, and Rocks* is more interesting from a technical than from a historical point of view.³ The great examples and models which he mentions over and over again are Tung Yüan and Li Ch'êng; Mi Fei is mentioned only for his characterization of Li Ch'êng, not as a model of painting. He winds up by the following remarks:—

"The most important thing in painting is *li* (reason or principle). Wu Jung⁴ said in a poem: 'A good workman can grasp the *li* of painting in colour, but to use the ink rightly is very difficult.' Li Ch'êng treasured ink like gold. The four things which must be avoided beyond everything else are: slouch, sweetness, vulgarity, and recklessness."

Wang Mêng, *tzŭ*, Shu-ming, *hao*, Huang-hao, usually ranked as the third of the great landscape painters of the Yüan period, was a somewhat younger man who lived into the Ming period (died 1385). He was born at Wu-hsing (Kiangsu), and his mother was a daughter of Chao Mêng-fu, who is said to have been his first model in art,

"but when he grew up, he did not care to please the people of his time, but used his brush simply to express his natural genius. He worked with tremendous speed and was

¹ Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pls. 169, 170.

² Quoted in *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*.

³ Known to me only through the reprint in *Hua Hsüeh Hsin Yin*.

⁴ A poet at the end of the T'ang period.

able to write a thousand characters in a few moments; and he was considered a great scholar by superior men." In painting landscape he took Tung Yüan and Chü-jan as models, but also Wang Wei . . . "He combined the 'wrinkles' of several schools and painted landscapes in more than ten different ways and also trees in more than ten different styles. The roads and passage-ways he made curving and winding; the mist and clouds vague and indistinct, and represented perfectly the depth of the mountain forests."¹

This characterization applies fairly well to the works by Wang Mêng still preserved, but it may be noted that Chang Ch'ou, who has a great deal more to say about the painter than can be quoted here, claims that he followed the style of Li Shêng, and that there were works by him executed in a very detailed and careful fashion as well as roughly sketched pictures done with a vigorous brush.² Then he goes on to offer the following interesting criticism:—

"Among the four great painters of the Northern Sung dynasty Li Ch'êng ranked first, then came Tung Yüan, Chü-jan, and Fan K'uan. Among the four great painters of the Southern Sung, Liu Sung-nien ranked first, then came Li T'ang, Ma Yüan, and Hsia Kuei. Among the four great painters of the Yüan dynasty Chao Mêng-fu ranked first, then came Huang Kung-wang, Wang Mêng, and Wu Chên. Tung Yüan's and Huang Kung-wang's works are more than wonderful. Ma Yüan's, Hsia Kuei's, and Wu Chên's works are of a rustic kind, and I am not very fond of them; they are mentioned simply because they were esteemed by people of past times; but my opinions may have to be corrected by true connoisseurs. Nowadays people consider the paintings of the Yüan dynasty as of the highest class, but they do not realize that the painters of the Yüan period all learned from the masters of T'ang and Sung. True works by the T'ang and Sung masters are, however, very rare, and what the amateurs mostly see are copies, which may cause this indifference. Take, for example, Wang Mêng's landscape; the human figures, the trees, the plants, the mist, the clouds, the effects of the whole thing are imitated after Li Shêng. Only the manner of the 'wrinkles' is somewhat different. There is a picture by Li Shêng, in the possession of the Hsiang family, representing *The Great Sages*; study it carefully, and you will find the proofs (of what I have said). People of to-day are careless and do not examine things (properly). But they should be ashamed and remember that our ancestors in sacrificing to the waters did it first to the rivers and then to the sea, which is the right order."

Wang Mêng was evidently an intensely productive painter who created masses of large mountain landscapes, but we are nevertheless told that he usually kept his pictures for three years in his studio at T'ai-an, opposite T'ai shan, before finishing them. The silk was spanned on the wall of the room, and he worked on the pictures only when he felt inspired. Some of them were coloured, others in pure ink. Those which have survived are, as far as I know, all of the latter class, and they are to-day more than ever reckoned by Chinese collectors among the greatest treasures of old painting, quite in accordance with the opinion criticized by Chang Ch'ou in the above-quoted passage. A detailed study of Wang Mêng's works would easily fill a volume, because there are still dozens of them in private collections in China and Japan,³ whereas no authentic specimens of his art seem to have

¹ Quoted from *Hsü Hung Chien Lu* in *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 54.

² *Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*, vol. xi.

³ Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Catalogue*, pls. 172-80; in *Chung-kuo Ming Hua Chi* are four pictures by the master; others are reproduced in *Kokka*, 441, and in *Nanshu Gwashu*.

reached Europe or America, a fact which also may serve to throw some light on the particular characteristics of the master. There can be no doubt regarding his historical importance as the creator of the *Wên-jên-hua* type, but whether he is one of the very greatest masters of Chinese painting, as claimed by modern collectors, becomes evidently a question of æsthetic ideals.

Chang Ch'ou's opinion that he was closely dependent on the art of the Sung masters and particularly on the works of Li Shêng is hardly verified by the works of his known to me; their interest lies rather in the fact they are absolutely different, not to say opposed, to the landscape paintings of the Southern Sung period. But he may have painted, in earlier years, things of a more traditional type. The nearest approach to tradition among Wang Mêng's works known to me, is the very fine large landscape belonging to Mr. Shao Fu-ying in Peking, which may be said to show some slight resemblance to the works of Chü-jan, though it is executed with more strength and decision than the landscapes of the monk-painter. (Pl. 118.) It is not dated, only provided with an inscription by the artist. The towering mountains, which rise in several layers over the broad torrent and the terraces with the charming pavilions in the foreground, are designed in a similar fashion as in the works of Fan K'uan and Chü-jan, but they are defined in greater detail with innumerable "wrinkles" and folds, and have more structure than the mountains of the earlier masters. The picture seems to me altogether one of the most enjoyable works by Wang Mêng, presumably painted before he had reached the final stage in his evolution.

As examples of his later works may be mentioned two pictures in Mr. Ti Pao-hsien's collection in Peking, both signed and one dated 1366. (Pl. 119.) They represent tall vertical sections of mountain massifs, which fill the pictures practically from the top to the bottom. There is hardly any free space; the view seems almost to be cut out of a larger composition; the majestic motives are brought very close to the beholder, as if the artist was trying to emphasize their overpowering grandure. The incessant movement of the wreathing and bulging forms would be confusing, were it not that it is dominated by a continuous rhythm, which also is accentuated in the brush-work. It is admirable but almost suffocating.

This was the type of imaginative landscape painting that henceforth became the ideal of the scholars and the learned critics. To them it was a revelation of the overwhelming grandure and infinite richness of nature, far more interesting than the spacious and poetic compositions by Ma Yüan or Hsia Kuei, something that could be intellectually enjoyed like an intricate argument, and not simply vaguely felt like the reflection of a lonely pine or the autumn moon in the soul of man. Few artists have had a greater influence on subsequent evolution than Wang Mêng or given more complete and commanding expression to the new æsthetic ideals of his time. Their relative importance in comparison with the ideals of preceding epochs of Chinese painting will always remain a matter of personal taste and culture.

Ni Tsan, whose appreciations of the four great masters of the Yüan period have been quoted in the preceding pages, was himself subsequently placed in the foremost class, which was then made to comprise six masters, i.e. Chao Mêng-fu, Kao K'ò-kung, Huang Kung-wang, Wang Mêng, Ni Tsan, and Wu Chên. He was born in 1301, the son of a wealthy family at Wu-hsing, and lived to the seventh year of Ming Hung Wu (1374). Ni Tsan's *tzŭ* was Yüan-chên, but he was known under at least ten different fancy names such as Yün-lin, Ni-yü, Ching-ming chü-shih (The Spotless Scholar), and others. He was a great collector and built the Ch'ing-pi pavilion for his old writings and paintings.¹ By his love for the old-fashioned (which he also expressed by writing only *li* characters), and by his great fondness of cleanliness he resembled Mi Fei, but he was of a more timid nature and shunned official life. Very few people found the way to the place where he lived hidden from the world, and he consequently got the name Ni-yü, Unapproachable Ni. And in order to feel still more free and unhampered

"he distributed all his wealth among friends and relatives and started to travel in the boats of the fishermen along the Five Lakes and the Three Rivers (of Kiangsu). Sometimes he made long visits to the Buddhist temples and felt quite satisfied with a wooden bed and a bamboo lamp. And the pictures which he made of bamboos and rocks he gave away freely; but as they became known, collectors offered great sums for them. It thus happened that a prominent man sent a messenger to him with gifts of silk and money to obtain some pictures, but Ni Tsan felt it as an offence and said: 'I have never during my whole life painted for the highfliers.' He tore up the silk and returned the money." After his death his pictures became so highly appreciated that the Kiang-nan families were divided into two classes; such that possessed, and such that did not possess pictures by Ni Tsan. A consequence of this excessive appreciation of Ni Tsan's works was also a great quantity of copies and imitations.

Authentic pictures by Ni Tsan are not very common; yet, a dozen or more are known in public and private collections in China and Japan, most of them representing autumn views with stretches of quiet water between rocky shores with a few bare trees. The cool greyish atmosphere is perfectly suggested by the tone of the paper and the light ink; they seem to be ensouled by the quiet resignation of the autumn day. There is no calligraphic elaboration in these landscapes, no crowding of motives, simply a very sensitive recording of some visual impressions of the river scenery of Kiangsu; and as the horizon usually is lower than in the traditional Chinese landscapes, they become more alike to European ink-drawings than to the pictures of Wang Mêng or the *Wên-jên-hua*. Beautiful examples of such paintings by Ni Tsan may be seen, for instance, in the Palace Museum in Peking,² and in the collections of Mr. P'ang Yüan-chi (dated 1345), Mr. F. Abe, Sumiyoshi, Mr. Hashimoto (dated 1362),³ and also in the National Museum, Stockholm (dated 1374).⁴ (Pl. 120.) They represent the most common type of Ni Tsan's works.

¹ The main records about Ni Tsan are collected in *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 54, and *Shu Hua Fang*, vol. xi.

² Cf. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. xiii.

³ Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pls. 181, 182, and the *Cat. of the Abe collect.*, pl. 24.

⁴ *Chin. and Jap. Sculpt. and Paint. in the Nat. Mus.*, Stockholm, pl. 43. For other similar pictures by Ni Tsan see, Omura, *Bunjin Gwasen*, pls. 6, 7.

In other compositions the river-banks rise into mountains of broad and solid shapes but these, too, are drawn with a light brush clearly and simply without any calligraphic transposition or accentuation of folds and "wrinkles". (Pl. 121.) Two examples are in the National Museum in Peking, another was in the Imperial Manchu Household collection (signed and dated 1352). There are, of course, variations or combinations of these compositional types, though Ni Tsan's works are on the whole more unified, not to say monotonous, than the works of the other great landscape painters, but characteristic of them all is the charming simplicity and directness with which he is recording the quiet river scenes.

In later years Ni Tsan seems occasionally to have painted with a somewhat broader brush and stronger accents of light and shade, as may be seen in his famous picture of the Lion Grove Garden (*Shih-tzŭ ling*) in Su-chou.¹ According to his inscription on the picture, he painted it in 1373 in the manner of Ching Hao and Kuang T'ung, but the result is an uncommonly fresh and colouristically effective picture of the fantastic rockeries (in "lion-shapes"), the old trees, and the pavilions in the bamboo grove. The handling of the ink is almost as free and strong as in the works of Shên Chou (fifteenth century). No wonder that the Emperor Ch'ien Lung loved this picture in particular, but what a pity that he could not find a less ambitious way of expressing his admiration than by covering all the empty space with poems (seven of them!) and seals.

The greatest poet among the landscape painters of the Yüan period was, however, Wu Chên, *tzŭ*, Chung-kuei, *hao*, Mei-hua Tao-jên (the Taoist of the Plum-blossoms). He was born in 1280 at Chia-hsiang, where he passed most of his life, and died 1354). Like Ni Tsan's, his nature was "lonely and pure", but he could be "impetuous and obstinate" (as many of these Taoist recluses), and wielded the brush with extraordinary energy. He painted, like the rest of these men, to express his genius and distributed his works freely to those who did not ask for them; nor did he, to begin with, meet much appreciation from the picture collectors. We are told that they did not come to him with their gifts, but went to his next door neighbour, the painter Shêng Mou. His wife laughed at him for this lack of success, but he answered confidently: "It will not be so after twenty years." The chronicler adds: "His words came true; Shêng Mou may have known the short-cuts in art (how to express much by little), but he did not (like Wu Chên) possess the freshness of the vast sky or the air of the woods, which make the spirit-harmony (*ch'i yün*) in art."²

Indeed, Shêng Mou (*tzŭ*, Tzŭ-chao) was a very able painter, as may be seen in his four large mountain landscapes in the Palace Museum in Peking, but he had little new to say and continued in the footsteps of Chü-jan and Fan K'uan when he

¹ The picture is in the form of a short scroll, published in a separate volume, by the *Yen-kuang-shih* in Peking (1927). According to inscriptions by Ch'ien Lung's officials, pictures of the same motive were done by Ni Tsan's contemporary Chu Tê-jun and by a later painter, Hsü Pên. Mentioned by Ferguson (op. cit., p. 146) with wrong dates.

² The biographical records about Wu Chên in *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 54, and *Shu Hua Fang*, vol. xi.

did not imitate Wu Chên.¹ A comparison between the two painters brings out Wu Chên's genius in the most striking way. He is also said to have followed Chü-jan as a landscape painter, but it would be difficult to detect in his landscapes any dependence on this predecessor. More evident is the connection with Wên T'ung, the unattainable ideal of all the bamboo painters. One of Wu Chên's biographers says that, while Wên T'ung concealed his paintings in the bamboos, Wu Chên concealed the bamboos in the paintings; which may refer to the fact that the compositions of the Sung master were more rich and luxuriant than the slender designs of Wu Chên. Yet, they had something of the same virility and strength.

The pictures by Wu Chên still preserved in Far Eastern collections are quite numerous, and show considerable variations. Among the landscapes there are the large finished compositions with a background of high mountains and a foreground of water and tall trees. They are strong and imposing by their designs as well as by the firm and energetic brush-work. Excellent examples of this kind are preserved in the Palace Museum and in Mr. Ti Pao-hsien's collection. (Pl. 122.)² To this class may also be counted the wonderful large picture of two gnarled firs on a hilly slope in the Palace Museum, which is executed in great detail and with a most sensitive modulation of the ink tones (dated 1329).³ The other class is formed by the smaller broadly sketched pictures, which are more like improvisations or spontaneous records, jotted down with a few touches of the brush. Mr. Wang Hêng-yung in Peking has a couple of such pictures; others are in the collection of Mr. Abe in Sumiyoshi, and in the Boston Museum. They are vibrant with tone and atmosphere, intimate and strong, often with a touch of humour in the characterization of the figures, which are mostly placed in a boat. (Pl. 123.) They make us recall some of Daumier's masterly sketches, though the figures in Wu Chên's pictures form simply a minor element in the representation of the evening haze over the quiet beaches. These are the pictures executed with dry ink, which are mentioned by a critic, who praises their deep spirit-harmony (*ch'i yün*) and quotes the following words by Ni Tsan: 'Mei Tao-jên lived at the Plum-blossom cottage. At his window stood the stone goblet filled with resinous wine. When he got drunk, he swung the brush and painted the air of the mountains, the haze, the mist, and the clouds without a flaw'—words which well express the beauty of Chung-kuei's art."

Wu Chên himself wrote a great number of poetic inscriptions on his pictures, thus completing them not only intellectually, but also from a decorative point of view by his beautiful "running hand", and these poems were after his death collected and edited by a certain Ch'ien Fên under the title *I Mo* (Ink Remains).⁴

¹ Cf. *Ku Kung*, vols. iii and v. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vols. x and xiv. Other pictures by Shêng Mou in *Kokka*, 213, 260, and *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 192.

² *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. xi; on paper; size: 4 ft. 5 in. by 1 ft. 8 in., and *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 185.

³ *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. ix; on silk; size: 5 ft. 6 in. by 3 ft. 5 in.

⁴ Reprinted in *Mei Shu Ts'ung Shu*, Part III (sect. I), chap. 4.

They are mostly quite short, but rich in feeling and metaphoric expression, referring to his solitary walks or his travels along the rivers. For instance: "The pines are high; the wind is growing and moans without a stop. The old stream of the mountain-springs murmurs in solitary gloom. The jade pebbles are eaten away and shifted the day long. I sing the ode of the *Purple Fungus* to stir the mighty autumn."

Before proceeding to study the bamboo paintings of Wu Chên and his contemporaries, two or three more landscape painters should be mentioned, because even if they did not reach the fame of the great masters, they are known through many interesting paintings.

Ts'ao Chih-pai, better known under his *hao*, Yün-hsi, served during the reign of Kublai Khan as a professor in a government college, but resigned in order to devote himself entirely to Taoist studies and painting. He studied the works of Li Ch'êng and Kuo Hsi, and painted river scenes with high firs in a rather minute, but yet strong manner, as may be observed in two important pictures in the Palace Museum and others in private collections in China and Japan.¹ Some of his works recall Ni Tsan's pictures, but they are less subtle and spontaneous.

Lu Kuang, *tzü*, Chi-hung, *hao*, T'ien-yu, was a more progressive painter, who is said to have followed Wang Mêng, an influence which is not particularly striking in the rocky landscape in Mr. G. Harada's collection in Tokyo.² We are also told that he painted the branches of his trees, "like dancing phoenixes and startled snakes," a characterization which might just as well (or even better) apply to the elaborate plummy branches on the trees of Ts'ao Chih-pai.

Fang Ts'ung-i, *tzü*, Wu-yü, *hao*, Fang-hu, from Kuei-hsi (Kiangsi), was perhaps a greater genius as painter than the two above-mentioned artists. He lived as a Taoist monk in the Shang-ching temple and painted hazy mountain landscapes in the style of the two Mi, and consequently he sometimes also comes very close to Kao K'o-kung. He was still active in the Hung Wu period. The Palace Museum contains at least two beautiful pictures by him, the one representing mountains in snow-mist, the other a steep cliff-path leading up to a mountain peak that rises above the mist, both done with gleaming blotty ink.³ A minor sketch of his was in the Imperial Manchu Household collection (Pl. 125), and other examples are in private hands in Japan.

His very sketchy and suggestive style is rather well characterized by the critic who wrote:⁴

"Fang-hu was the cleverest among the students of the Immortals. (In his works) the thing which has no shape got shape, and though it had shape, it returned to the shapeless. To be able to express this in painting is the highest perfection. If he wasn't an Immortal, how could he have done such things?"

¹ Cf. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vols. ii and vii, and *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, 160, 161, 162.

² Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 163.

³ Cf. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vols. v and xiv, also *Kokka*, 348. Omura, *Bunjin Gwasen*, pls. 1, 3, 5, 6. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 165.

⁴ Ssü An-chi quoted in *Shu Hua P'u*, vol. 54.

(5) *Painters of Bamboo and Plum-Blossoms*

Even in the shortest discussion of painting during the Yüan period some words must be devoted to bamboo painting, because this speciality grew now into unprecedented importance. By its relatively abstract nature, its particular demands on brush-work, and its traditional symbolism (which was pointed out in an earlier chapter), it becomes like a touch-stone for the skill and the mentality of the artists. It offered them a medium or a formula of expressing their characters, or attitude of mind, which sometimes was bending, though never broken by the rule of the Mongols. And since bamboo painting, to a certain extent, became a criterion of artistic competence, it was more or less cultivated by the majority of painters and by a great number of scholarly *dilettanti*. Chao Mêng-fu was a good bamboo painter, as witnessed by a work of his in the Palace Museum¹; his wife, Kuan Tao-shêng was a highly admired specialist in this art; Kao K'ò-kung's bamboo paintings were of the same superior quality as his landscapes, Ch'ien Hsüan and Wang Yüan painted bamboo and other plants and trees; Ni Tsan made also some intimate paintings of bamboo groves, as mentioned before, and besides these great artists there were many lesser painters who painted bamboos as well as landscapes. When we come to men like Li K'an, K'ò Chiu-ssü, Ku An, and Wu Chên, we find that bamboo painting was the great interest of their lives, they cultivated it as the highest form of art, they studied it and practised it almost as a religion. And the great master and founder of this cult was to them Wên T'ung, *tzü*, Yü-k'ò, the friend of Su Tung-p'ò and the ideal of all later bamboo painters in China. The works by him or his pupils were sought for all over the country and treasured as the sacred scriptures of this cult. Li K'an who was a man of great culture, president of the Board of Civil Office and one of the four members of the Privy Council under the Emperor Jên Tsung (1312-1320), has a great deal to tell about this in his *Chu P'u* (Bamboo Essay); an interesting booklet, but too long to be quoted in extenso; some extracts may serve to give an idea about his enthusiasm and the methods he followed in the study and practice of bamboo painting.

He starts by telling about his early experiences as a bamboo painter and his disappointments in trying to find the right models. His joy was intense when he finally succeeded in acquiring four authentic pictures by Wên T'ung; to this he added rubbings after stone-engravings of Wang Wei's bamboo paintings and specimens by Li P'ò, a bamboo painter of the Five Dynasties period, Mêng-hsiu, a monk painter of the Sung period, and Hsiao Yüeh, another Sung painter, all rare and precious works of art. As to the historical development he makes the following observations: "The painting of ink-bamboos started in the T'ang period, but the origin of it has not been investigated. According to tradition, Li shih (Li P'ò) of the Five Dynasties traced the shadows on the window and the others imitated him. Huang T'ing-chien thought that Wu Tao-tzü started to paint bamboos (but these were in colour). Until Sung there was a gradual development; then at last Wên T'ung appeared as a bright sun," etc. (see quotation on p. 37). Then he tells about his travels during ten years in search of Wên T'ung's works and how he, during his stay in Indo-China, studied and classified every variety of bamboo.

¹ Cf. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. xii.

After this historical introduction he gives his rules for bamboo painting. "In order to paint bamboo it is necessary to grasp the whole thing first completely in the mind; then, seize the brush, concentrate the attention, fix your eyes on the model and write it down quickly. Move the brush, go on, follow what you see as the buzzard shoots down on the hare. One moment's hesitation may defeat your work."

"Su Tung-p'o said: 'this was the way Yü-k'o taught me, but I could not do it. If the mind knows the right way, but one is unable to do it, the inner and the outer (faculty), the mind and the hand, do not harmonize. It is the fault of not studying enough.' As old Tung-p'o understood the way, but had not enough training, how could later men have had it? They only knew that bamboo painting does not consist in making joints and piling up leaves. They have either not conceived the whole thing in their minds, or they covet the high and far away at once, trying to skip the preparatory stages, and give free play to their emotions, rubbing and smearing in every direction. They call that to take a short-cut in the brush-work. Really, one should start by painting joint after joint, leaf after leaf, concentrating the thoughts on the brush-manner, continuing the training without getting tired. The artist must thus accumulate his power (of expression) until he arrives at the point when he can rely on himself and possesses the bamboo completely in his mind. At this stage he can move the brush and follow the model he sees before him. If not preparing in this way, he will grasp the brush in vain and be gazing at the thing in front of him without being able to represent it. But if he knows the rules and principles, his work will become faultless, and he need have no fear not to succeed. He may feel bound or restrained for some time, but he will become able to go beyond the rules."

Such is Li K'an's general exposition of the conditions of bamboo painting; the rest of his essay is devoted mainly to questions of more technical nature such as composition, drawing, and colouring, the "framework", etc., but when he discusses the ink-bamboos in particular, he makes the following statement, which may be quoted in conclusion as a device for all good bamboo painting:—

"Every stroke must be replete with a living thought; every side look natural. When the whole thing is rounded off (as if standing free) and the branches and leaves are moving, then the bamboo is accomplished."

No paintings by Li K'an have been identified, but those by K'o Chiu-ssü, Ku An, and Wu Chên may to some extent make up for the loss. K'o Chiu-ssü, *tzü*, Ching-chung, *hao*, Tan-ch'iu, was a learned man and served as a censor of books in the Tien-li era (1329). He painted his bamboos mostly in combination with old trees and rockeries and reached such fame that some people considered him the greatest in his art after Wên T'ung. A picture of his in the Palace Museum representing a dry tree, a rock, and some bamboos is remarkable for its sensitiveness rather than for any great strength of brush-work.¹

Ku An, *tzü*, Ting-chih, served as a judge in Ch'uan-chou in the Yüan t'ung era (1333-1334), and painted bamboos after the style of Hsiao Hsieh-lü. He represented the strong mountain bamboos shaken by the wind, bending and swaying like huge plumes, but yet full of virile strength. A perfect example of this mode is his picture in the Palace Museum, representing a tuft of high bamboo in strong wind on a peaceful rock.² Another picture in the same museum, representing some

¹ Cf. *Ku Kung*, vol. v. A small picture on paper: 1 ft. 9 in. by 1 ft. 5 in.

² Cf. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. i. A large picture on paper: 5 ft. 8 in. by 3 ft. 2 in.

stalks of bamboo, an old tree and a stone, was done in co-operation by Ku An, Ni Tsan, and Chang Shên.¹

The foremost of all these bamboo painters was, however, Wu Chên, who in this field as well as in landscapes manifested his strong poetic temperament. He was also an ardent follower of the Wên T'ung cult, and is said to have edited the short treatise known as *Wên Hu-chou Chu P'ai* (Wên Hu-chou's Bamboo School), which contains biographical notes about twenty-five painters who studied under Wên T'ung or continued his manner in later years. The notes do not convey much of artistic interest, but they form another eloquent proof of the boundless admiration for the old master and his school.

Wu Chên's bamboo paintings represent mostly single branches or short sections of the plants occasionally combined with a piece of rock. They are simpler in design, more limited and fugitive than the works of the above-mentioned painters, but surpassing them by the spirited rhythm of the brush-work.² By his perfect command of the ink-tones Wu Chên succeeds, like Wên T'ung, in giving an idea of the successive layers of leaves suggesting depth and space as well as movement, as may be seen in the picture here reproduced. (Pl. 124.) His works may, indeed, be said to meet the requirements formulated by Li K'an: Every brush-stroke is replete with thought, every branch and every leaf is moving. The poetic significance of the paintings is often emphasized by inscriptions by the artist, short and terse poems with a tone of sadness or resignation: "*Branches of Bamboo: An empty cave without a heart—but when the year grows cold its virtue will be known. The sky is bleak, the sun is sinking low, but they are still the same and keep their leaves in frost and snow.*"

Related to bamboo painting, though of a more limited significance, was the painting of water-plants, narcissi, orchids, and plum-blossoms. We had already occasion to say something about it in a previous chapter and mentioned there also some painters like Chao Mêng-chien, Wang Yen-sou, and Tsou Fu-lei, who continued this special branch of painting during the early part of the Yüan dynasty. They were followed by other men who passed it on into the Ming period and who did charming things of the same type as their predecessors. It was pre-eminently an art of monks and Taoist recluses. Best known among these later painters are the two monks Pai Tzŭ-t'ing and P'u-ming (*hao*, Hsüeh-ch'uang), whose paintings of reeds and orchids are highly appreciated by Far Eastern collectors,³ and Wang Mien (*tzŭ*, Yüan-chang), whose plum-blossom paintings are counted among the finest of their class. The water-plants and orchids by Pai Tzŭ-t'ing and P'u-ming,

¹ *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. v. Size: 2 ft. 9 in. by 2 ft. 8 in., signed by the three masters. Also in *Shih Ch'ü Pao Chi*.

² Bamboo paintings by Wu Chên are reproduced in *Nanshu Gwashu*, pl. i. *Bunjin Gwasen*, pl. 10. *Ku Kung Shu Hua Chi*, vol. ii and vii. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 189.

³ A characteristic picture representing Reeds and Water-Plants, by Pai Tzŭ-t'ing, is reproduced in *Nanshu Gwashu*, pl. iii. A series of four fine pictures by P'u-ming, "Rockeries, Plants, and Bamboos" are in the Imperial Collection in Japan. Cf. *Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pls. 214-17.

respectively, are of a somewhat freer type and convey more of the fragrance of nature than the pictures by Chao Mêng-chien, though they may not equal the old master in the purity of the brush-work.

Wang Mien was not a monk; he tried several times to pass the *chin shih* degree, but did not succeed. Finally he gave up further studies, bought a small raft, and started travelling, like the painters of old, along the rivers and lakes. Then he settled at the Chiu-li mountain in Chekiang and found it necessary (though very much against his artistic ambition) to sell his pictures in order to support his family. He was honoured by Emperor Hung Wu with a military office and died 72 years old in 1407. Like Wu Chên he used to complete his paintings with poetic inscriptions, and some of these were collected in the *Chu Chai* book of poems.

In his pictures he transmits the ever-recurring message of the approaching spring with never-failing lyric sentiment and supreme skill in the handling of brush and ink.¹ They are all filled with the brightness and the fresh atmosphere of a March day in Chekiang, when the soil is steaming after a snow-fall, and the sky is transparently blue. The branches of the old plum-trees are sprinkled with budding flowers, quivering with life, sometimes sparse and scattered, sometimes swarming like snowflakes, fastened on the dark branches, which may be strong "like dragon's horns", or bending "like angling rods". Their transient beauty is fixed in his pictures by the touch of a brush which is swift and crisp, yielding and strong, as the breezes of spring.

We have no reason to doubt the tradition, according to which the artist, on an early spring morning, when new-fallen snow covered the ground and the trees, ran up on a mountain and cried out: "This is the time when I hope to be transformed into an Immortal and rise on high". The same wish might have been expressed by many of the great painters, not only of the Yüan period but also of earlier times, to whom the great phenomena of nature, such as the new-fallen snow, were conducive to the state of mind which expressed itself in creative work. They delved into them as sources of inspiration and represented them not simply as outward motives but as reflexes of a universal consciousness, suggestions of more permanent states of life and beauty. Their endeavour was to dissolve in their works, to become the essence of the motives and to make them live not only by a resemblance with the changing aspects of outward phenomena but through the pulse of spiritual experiences which every one must make again for himself, if he is to understand the full significance of the painter's work.

¹ Pictures by Wang Mien are to be found in the collections of Count Daté, Tokyo (*Select Relics*, vol. xvi), Marquis Maeda (*Tokyo Exhib. Cat.*, pl. 197), Mr. Li Chuan, Shanghai (*Kokka*, 302), and Mr. Shao Fu-ying, Peking (Pl. 126).

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Kuo Hsi, A Village in the High Mountains. Palace Museum, Peiping.



Kuo Hsi, Mountain Landscape; Early Spring. Palace Museum, Peiping.



Kuo Hsi(?) Autumn in the Valley of the Yellow River. Freer Gallery, Washington.



Mi Fei, copy after, River and Mountains in Mist. National Museum, Peiping.

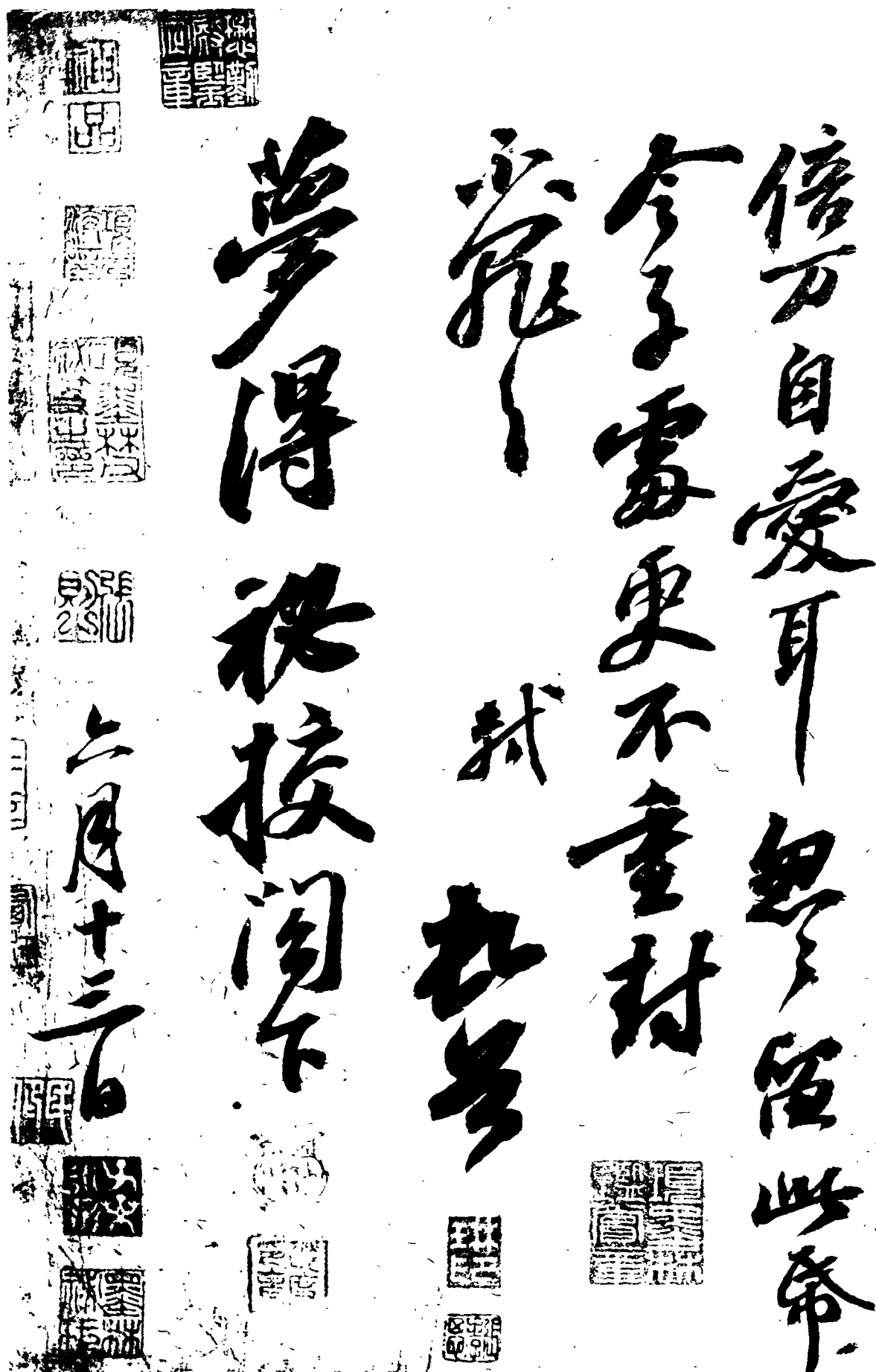


Mi Fei, attributed to, Spring Mountains and Pine Trees. Palace Museum, Peiping.



Mi Fei(?), Misty Landscape with Rounded Mountain Peaks. Freer Gallery.





Su Tung-p'o, Part of a Letter to his Friend Meng-tè. Ex. Imperial Manchu Collection.



Su Tung-p'o, A Stalk of Bamboo. Private Collection. China.

與可自謂竹州墨竹高風
第一流傳三日有餘載
更起遠想不覺欲畫時
歲年以誰得和如元起
磨身浩氣雄出何物
仙人新鳳練衣來不
見其身但見尾細羽
翎下未起餘音滿人
耳世間物性不同
有晚好醜隨他工作
有此君家幽淡不
與桃李爭春紅由
來美人姿不似
君子德古今清
高遠歌德如黃楊
君得此求我清
我今已老才力
衰願君努力
惜香墨衛武
敏有師

奉和王直為

唐汪宗伯題

壁上墨君不解語高節
萬仰風骨陽要看畫
霜前意冷清為散
意自衣寫真誰是
文夫子許我他年
作主無遠想納涼
清夜永平安時報
故人書
疏畫泰天鰲石何
思七春暖錦屏
翠玉堂妙筆交
符畫六合無
處不絕波老可
當年每畫二
滿堂賓客動秋
思看就過而
影在壁別出各
展玉一枝
誰是丹青三
昧手情密試
寫草琅玕而
書雅有冰霜
操一抱清風
五寸寒我亦
有亭深竹
裏一枝寒玉
王居暗暉
道逢黃髮
雙相目不改
清陰時我歸

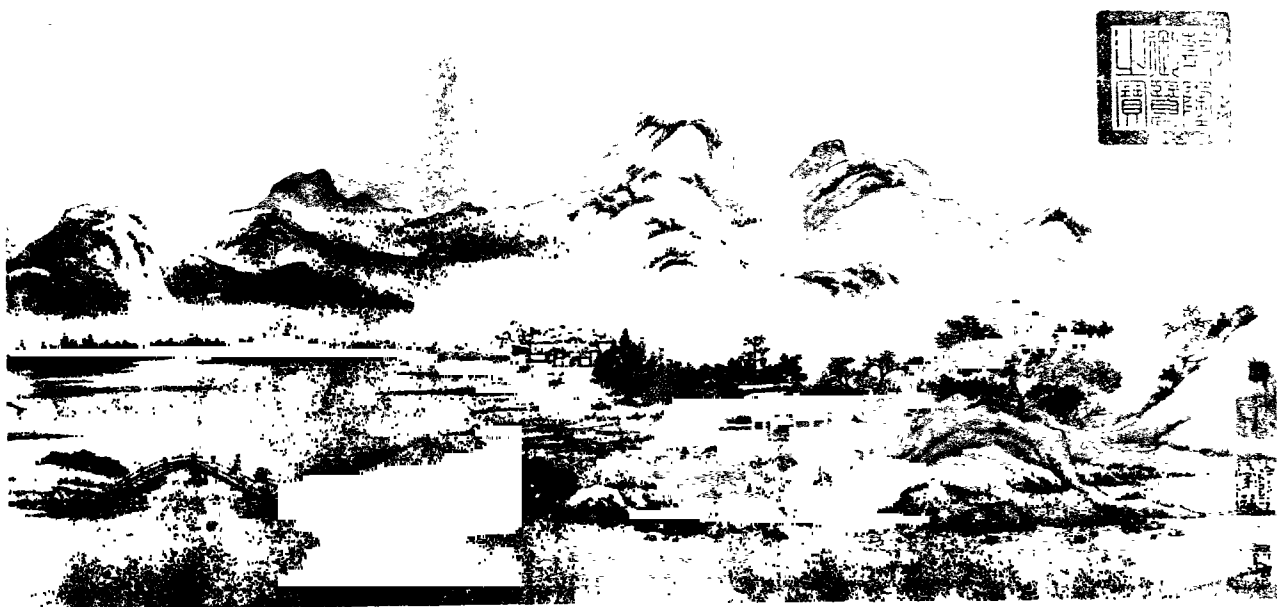
黃髮雙相目不改清陰時我歸



Wen T'ung, A Branch of Bamboo. Palace Museum, Peiping.



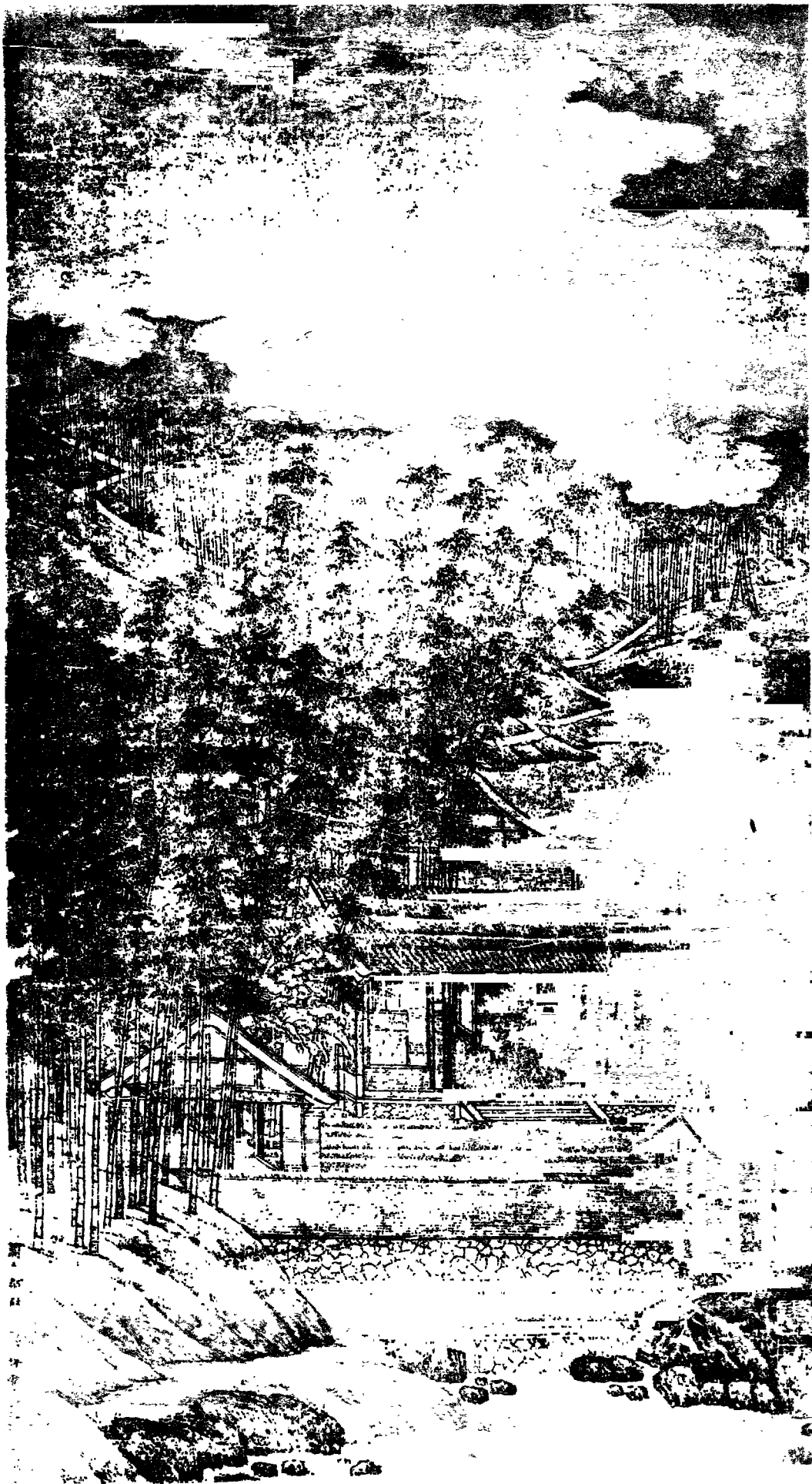
Ch'ao Pu-chih, Lao-tzu Riding on a Buffalo. Palace Museum, Peiping.



Chao Tchien, copy after, River and Mountains. Parts of a Scroll. National Museum, Peiping.



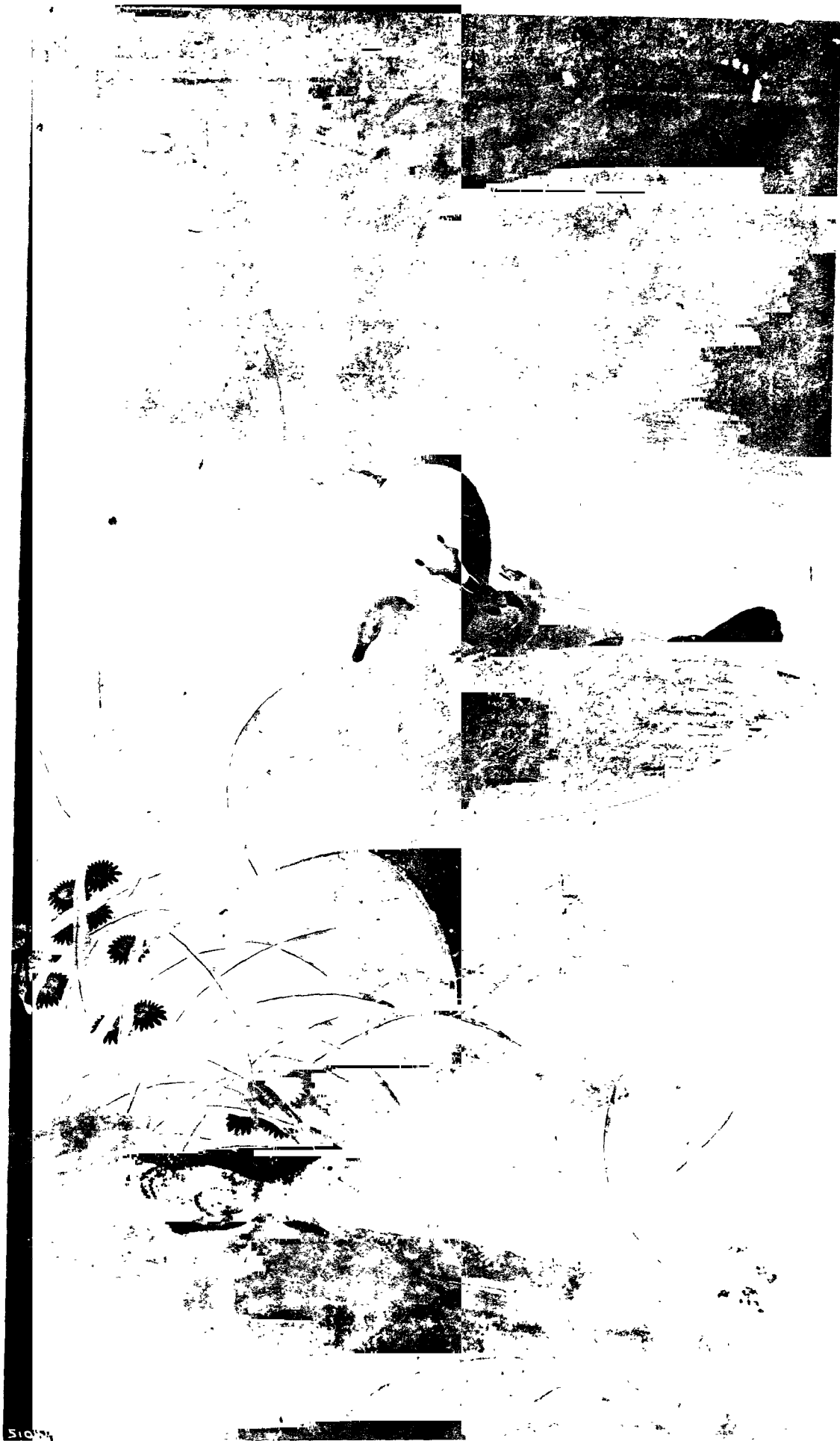
Chao Ta-nien, A Pavilion under Willow Trees. Boston Museum.



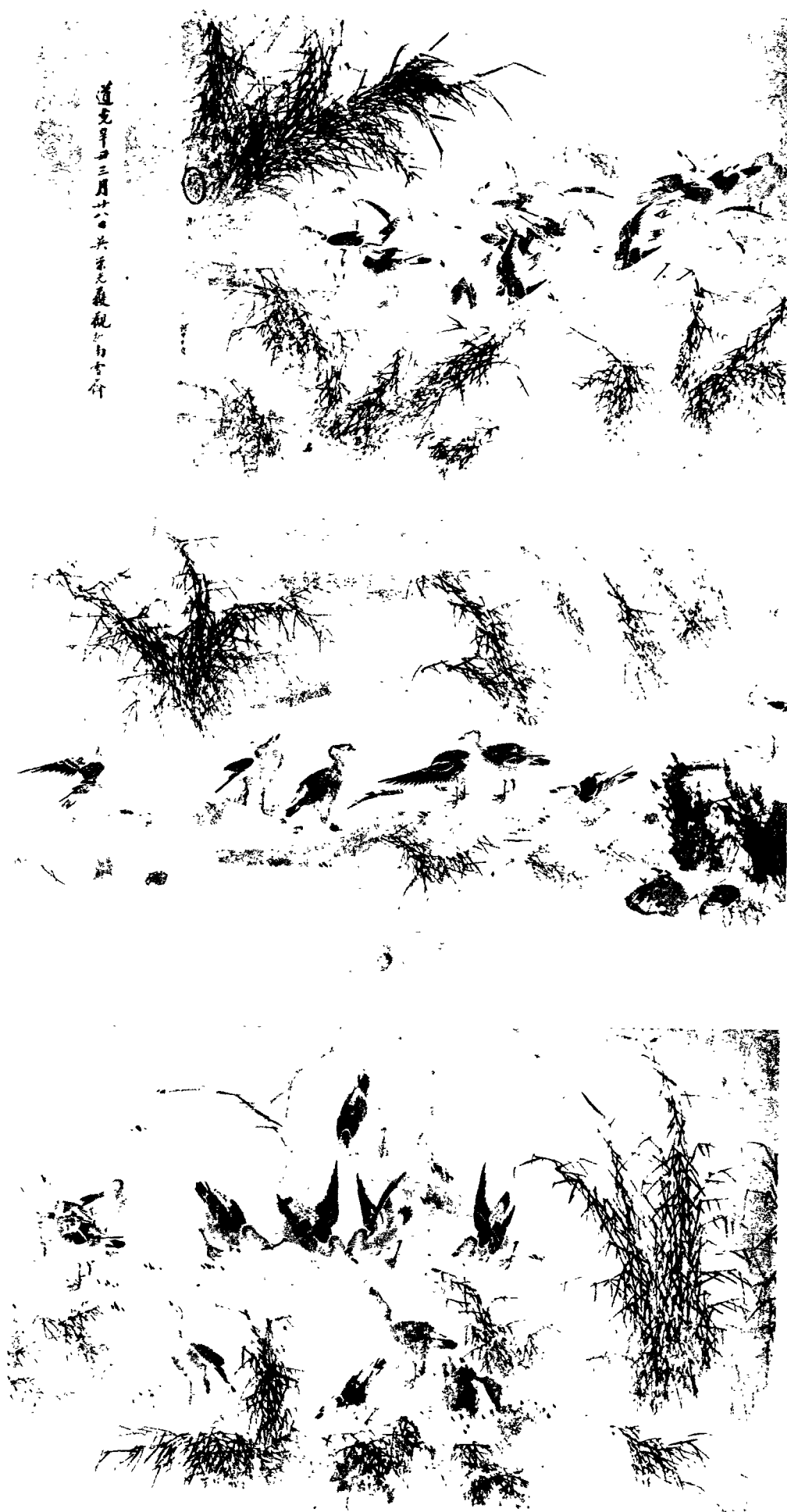
Li Wei, Bamboo Garden with Pavilions. Boston Museum.



Wu Yüan-yü, The Gander. Miss A. O'Brien, St. Paul, Minn.



Wu Yüan-yü, The Goose. Miss A. O'Brien, St. Paul, Minn.



Ma Fen, The Hundred Wild Geese. Parts of a Scroll. Honolulu Academy of Arts.



Ma Fen, The Hundred Wild-Geese. Parts of a Scroll. Honolulu Academy of Arts.



Ai Hsüan, copy after, Eggplant and Cabbage. National Museum, Peiping.



Northern Sung Painter, Mandarin Ducks under a Flowering Shrub. Freer Gallery.



Emperor Hui Tsung, A Quail and Daffodils. Marquis Asano, Hiroshima.



Emperor Hui Tsung, copy after, Monkey, Beetles and Dandelions. National Museum, Peiping.



Li Lung-mien, A Khotanese Horse and Groom. Ex. Imperial Manchu Household Collect.

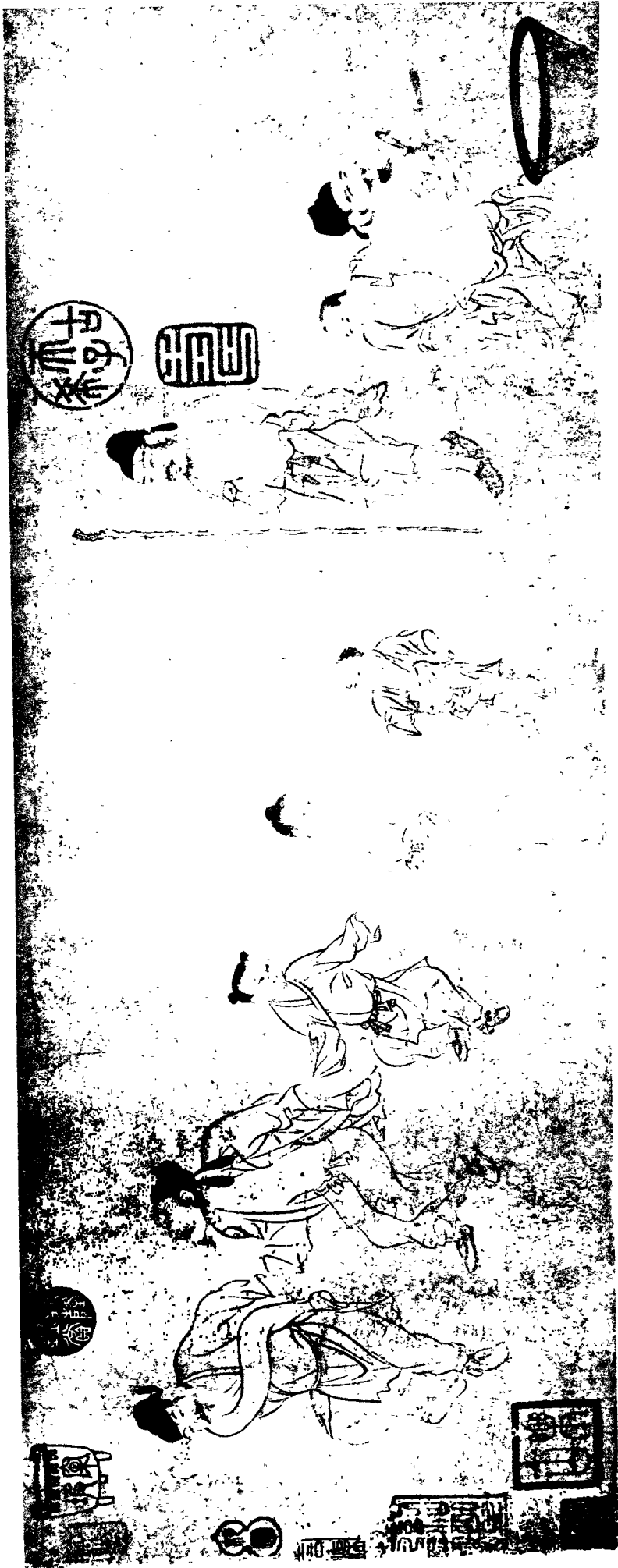


Li Lungmien, A Khotanese Horse and Groom. Ex. Imperial Manchu Household Collect.



石渠不藏筆塚圖云元
 惠自公辨常雅之名字
 既歲月勢非他人而能
 去白楊弄花旋舞多一
 神情士阿堵或生或主
 或旅作畫甚其發微茫
 骨既隨風散幸感債權
 清來冠六雅專宮而居
 陳不知情你足重為居
 代古來陵陵者士家都
 兼都作路在講大易注
 年時已此景漢世安
 能期
 甲辰影正治見

Li Lung-mien, Dancing and Frolicking People. Parts of the "Ch'i Jan t'u". Nat. Mus. Peiping.



Li Lung-mien, Dancers. Part of the "Ch'i Jan t'u". National Museum, Peiping.

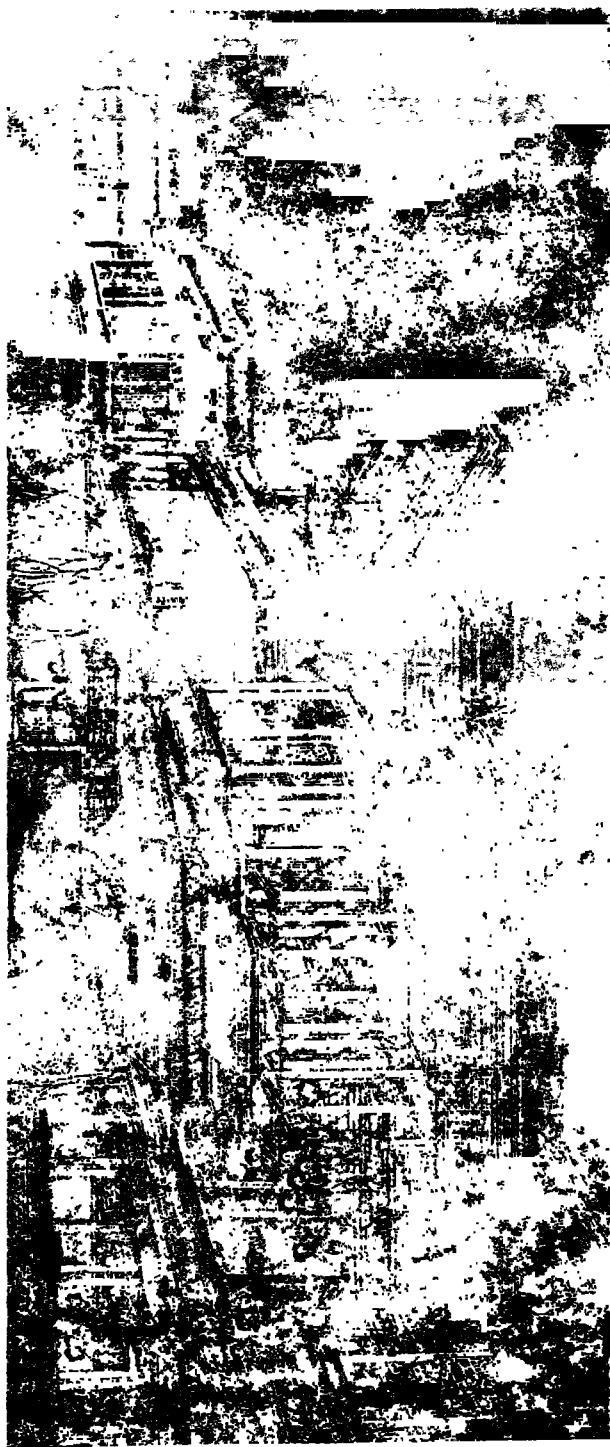


Li Lung-mien, copy after, Parts of the "Hill Farm" Scroll. National Museum, Peiping.

1



Li Lung-mien, attributed to, Imaginary Landscape with Fairies and Immortals. Freer Gallery.



Li Lung-mien, attributed to, Views of an Imperial Summer Palace. Freer Gallery.



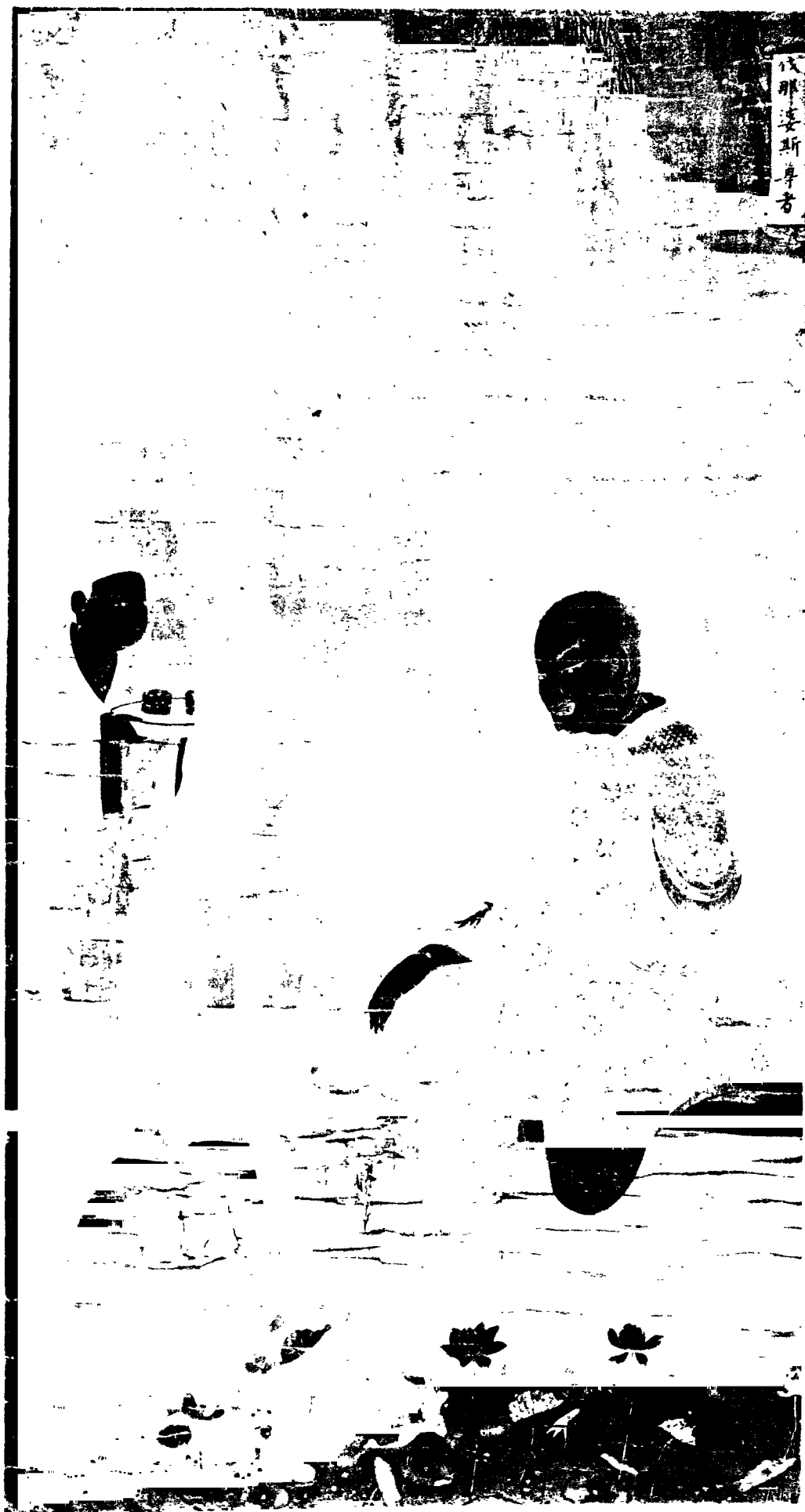
Ho Chung(?). Portrait of a Lady. Freer Gallery, Washington.



Chou Chi-ch'ang and Lin T'ing-kuei, Five Lohans descending on Clouds. Boston Museum.



Chou Chi-ch'ang and Lin T'ing-kuei, Buddhist Patriarchs triumphing over Taoists. Boston Museum



Lu Hsin-chung, Lohan seated at a Lotus Pond. Boston Museum.



Lu Hsin-chung, Lohan watching the Fight of two Dragons. Boston Museum.



Chang Ssü-kung, attributed to, Portrait of the Priest Pu-kung. Kozanji, Kyoto.



Li T'ang, The Village Doctor. National Museum, Peiping.



Li T'ang, Returning from a Village Feast in the Spring. Boston Museum.



Su Han-ch'en, The Toy Peddler. Palace Museum, Peiping.



Su Han-ch'en. A Lady before her Mirror. Boston Museum.



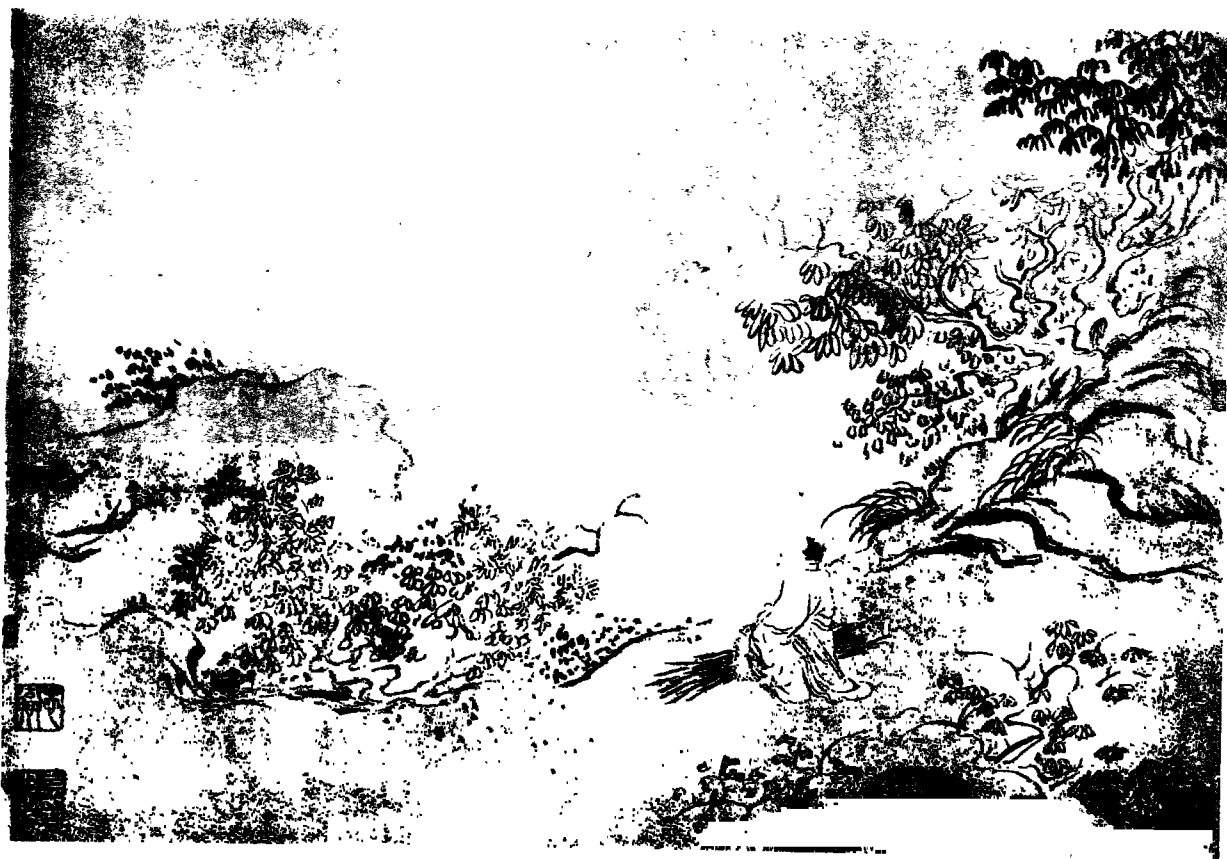
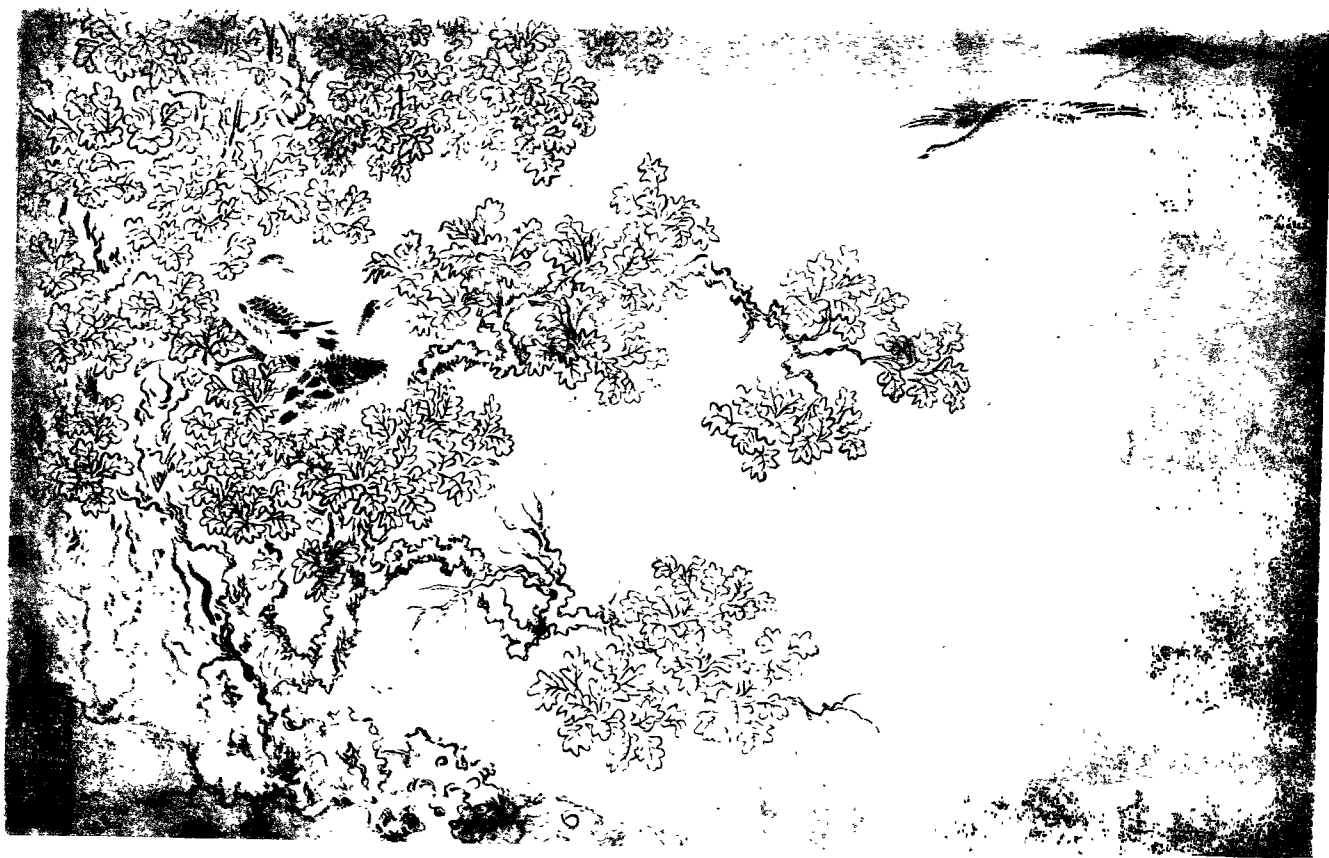
Chao Pochü, The First Emperor of the Han Dynasty entering the Ch'in Capital.
Boston Museum.



Chao Po-chü, Prisoners kneeling before the Han Emperor. Part of the preceding picture.



Chao Pochü, The Han Armies on March. Part of the preceding picture.



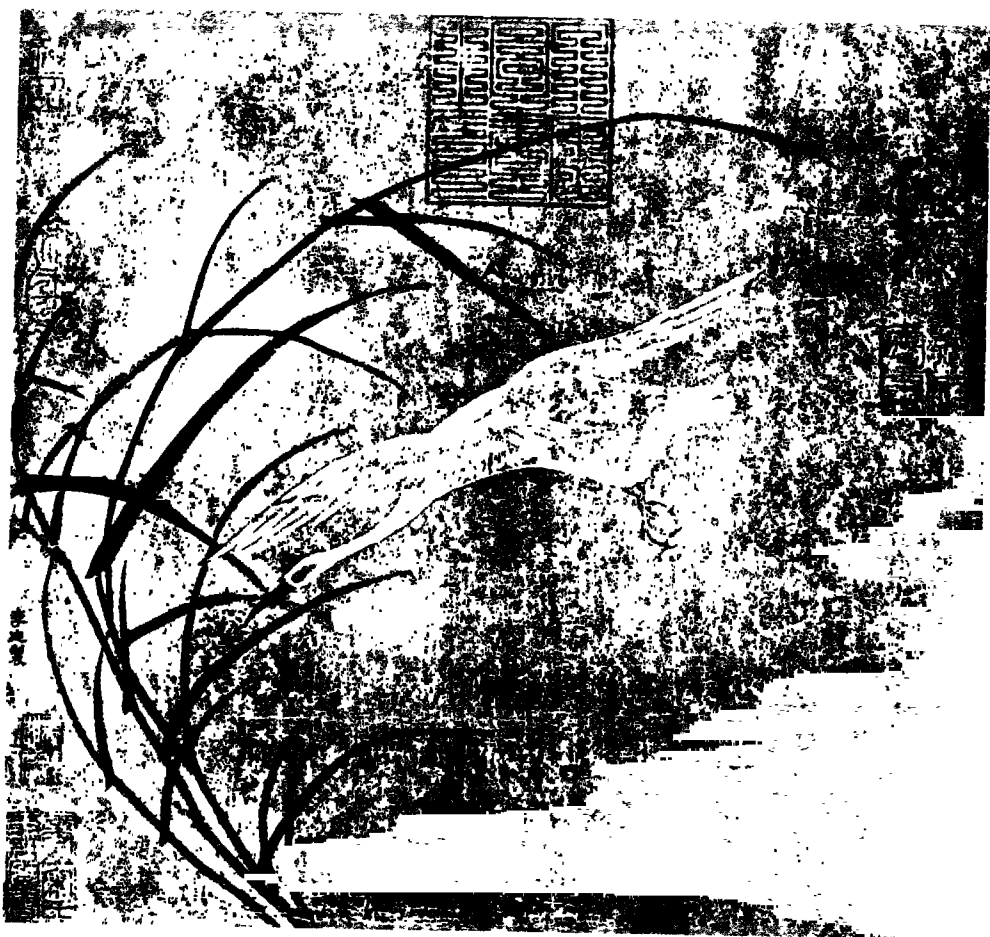
Ma Ho-chih (?), Two Illustrations to the "Mao Shih". Ex. Imperial Manchu Household Collect.



Ma Ho-chih, A Man Walking under a Wind-swept Tree. National Museum. Peiping.



1.

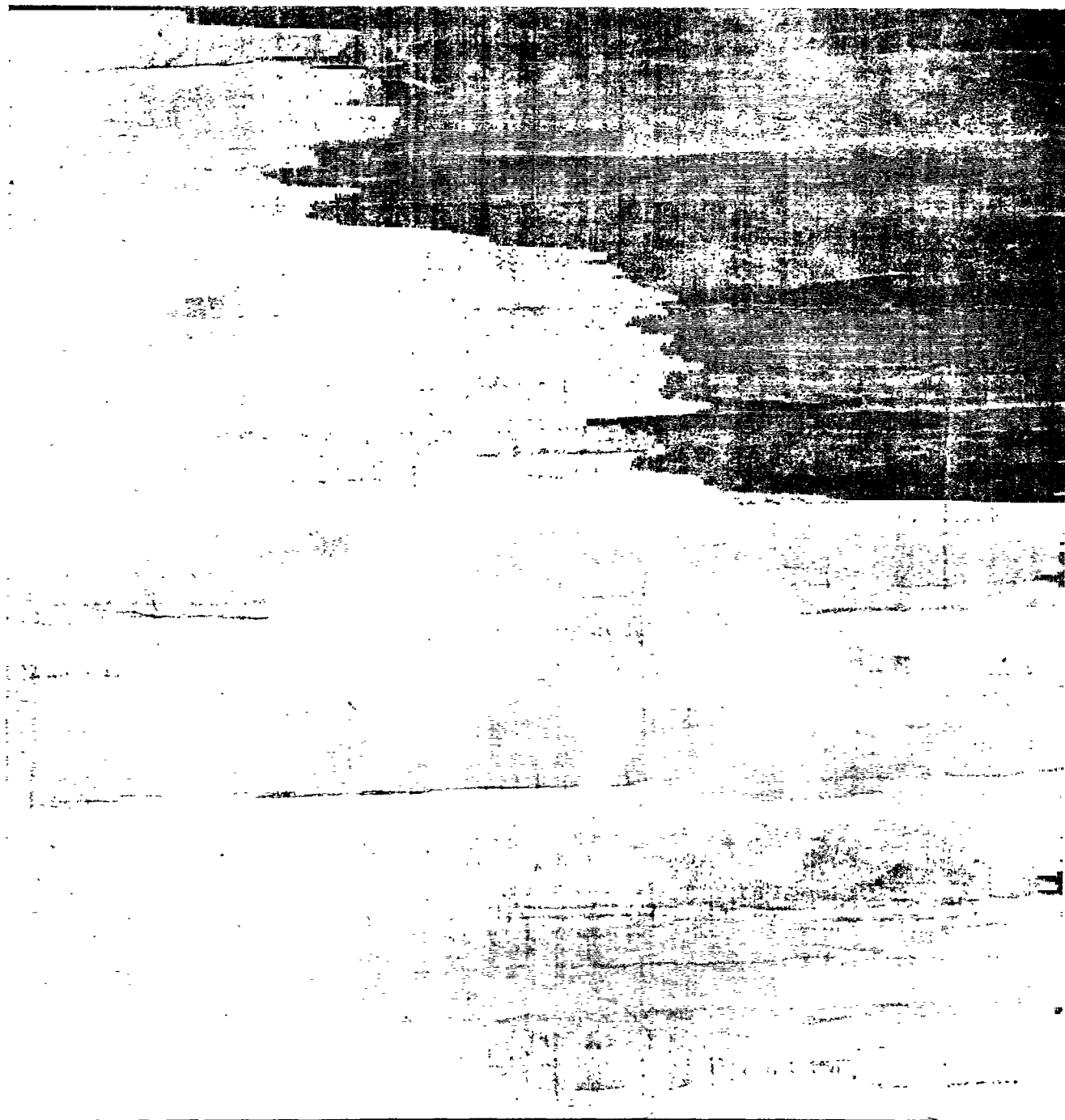


2.

Li Ti, 1. Hibiscus Flowers. Viscount Fukuoka.
2. Alighting Swan. Mr. Henry Oppenheim, London.



Li Ti(?), Water-Buffalo and Bamboos. Boston Museum.



Mao I, attributed to, A Dog. Boston Museum.



Chiang Ts'an, attributed to, Mountains and a Ravine in Mist. Boston Museum.



Chiang Ts'an, attributed to, The Hundred Bulls. Parts of a scroll. Metropolitan Museum. New York.



Hsiao Chao, manner of, A Waterfall among Pine-clad Rocks. Boston Museum.



Yen Tz'ü-p'ing, Mountain Landscape with Water and Pavilions. Palace Museum. Peiping.



Chu Jui, Bullock Carts travelling over a Mountain Path. Boston Museum.



Ma Kung-hsien, The Discussion between Yüeh Shan and Li Nao. Nanzenji. Kyoto.



Ma Kuei, Two Men in a Boat on an Evening Lake. Mr. K. Magoshi. Tokyo.



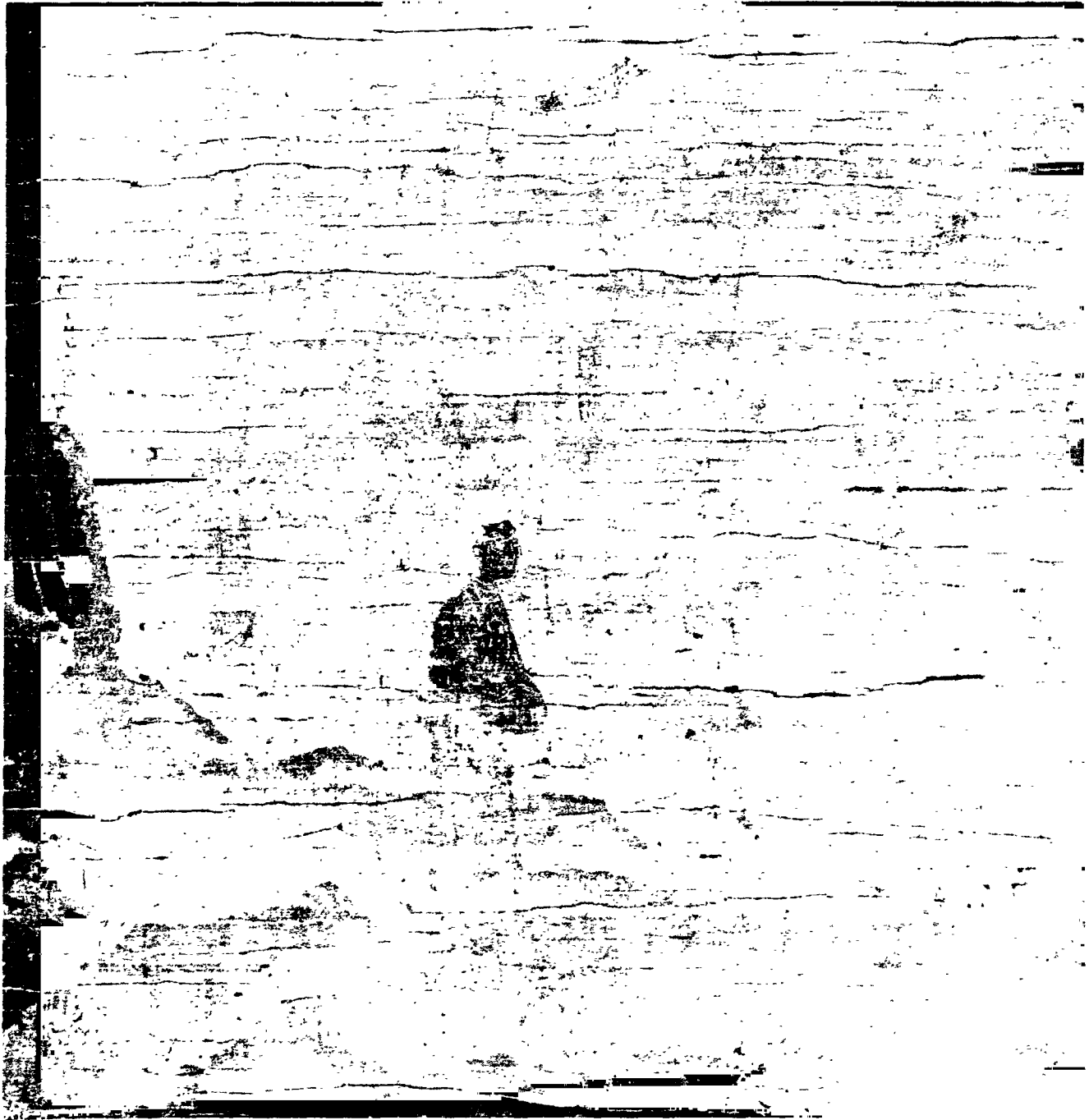
Ma Yüan, A Moonlit Night. Marquis Kuroda. Tokyo.



Ma Yüan, Mountains and Tall Pine-trees in Snow. Palace Museum. Peiping.



Ma Yüan, Early Spring Landscape with Willows. Boston Museum.



Ma Yüan, Lady Ling-chao standing in the Snow. Boston Museum.



Ma Yüan, An Angler on a Wintry Lake. Baron Mitsui. Tokyo.



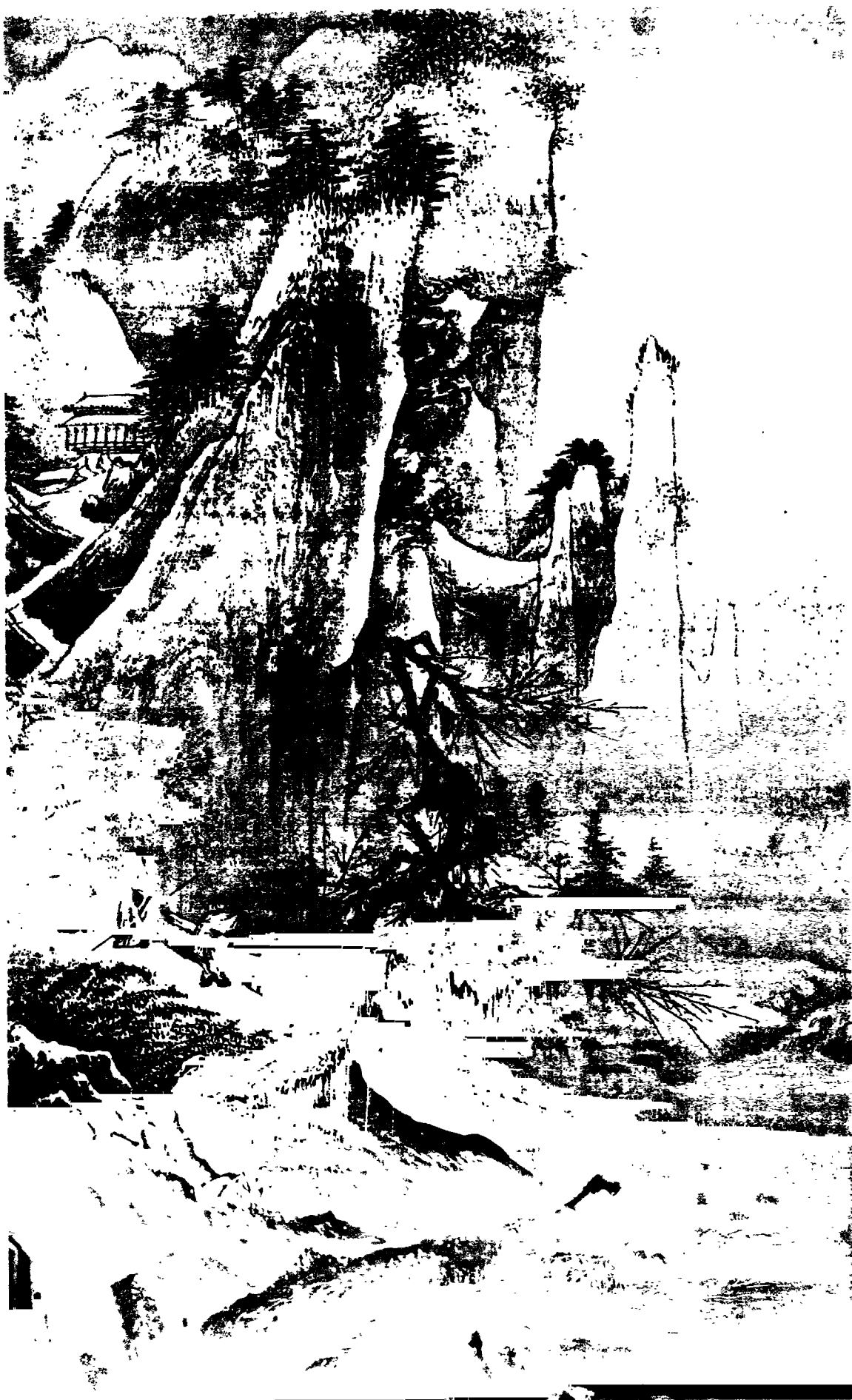
Ma Yüan, Terraced Pavilions. Boston Museum.



Ma Lin, Evening Landscape Mr. Nezu. Tokyo.



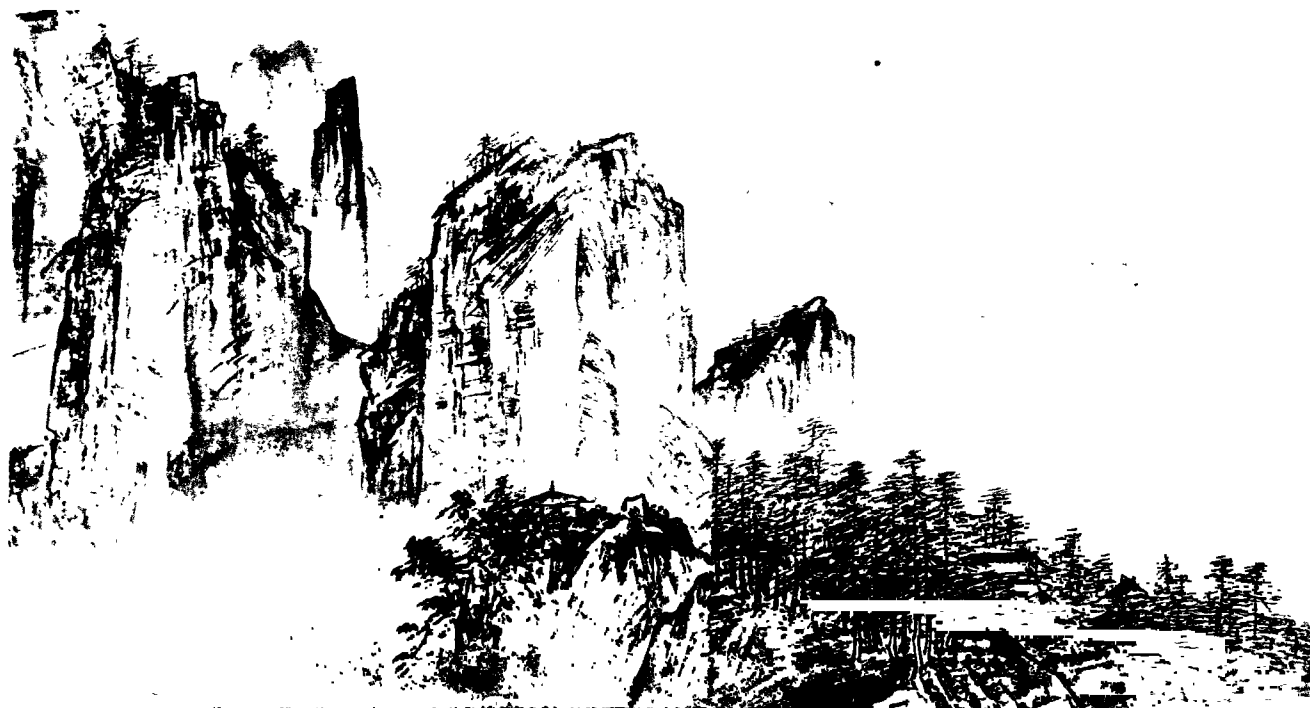
Ma Lin, A Rocky Beach. Boston Museum.



Hsia Kuei, "Looking for Plum-blossoms". Palace Museum, Peiping.



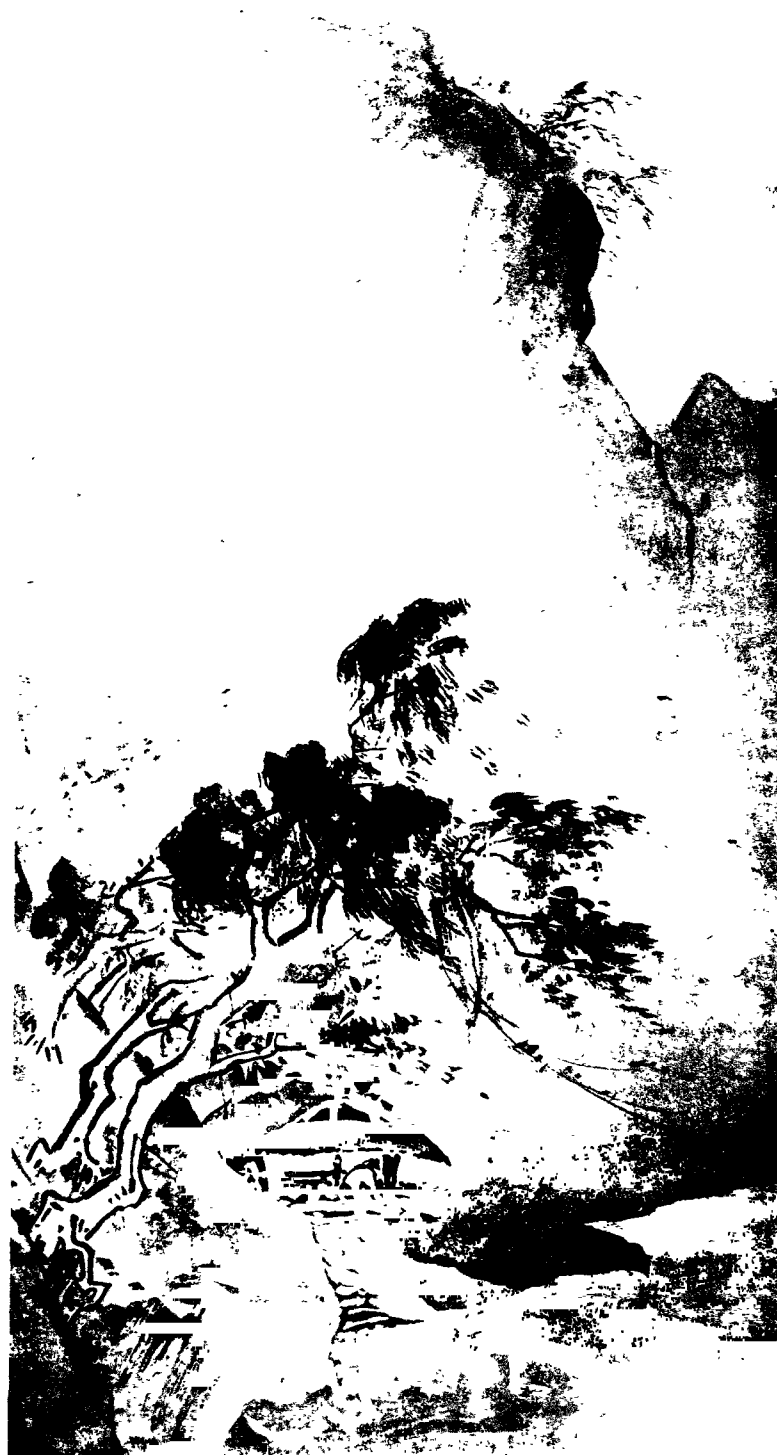
Hsia Kuei, River, Mountains and Trees. Two Parts of a long scroll.
National Museum, Peiping.



Hsia Kuei, River, Mountains and Trees. Two Parts of a long scroll. National Museum, Peiping.



Hsia Kuei, River, Mountains and Trees. Two Parts of a long scroll.
National Museum, Peiping.



Hsia Kuei, A Rain-Storm. Kawasaki Collection. Kobe.



Hsü Shih-ch'ang, Mountain Landscape with a Scholar's Abode. Freer Gallery.



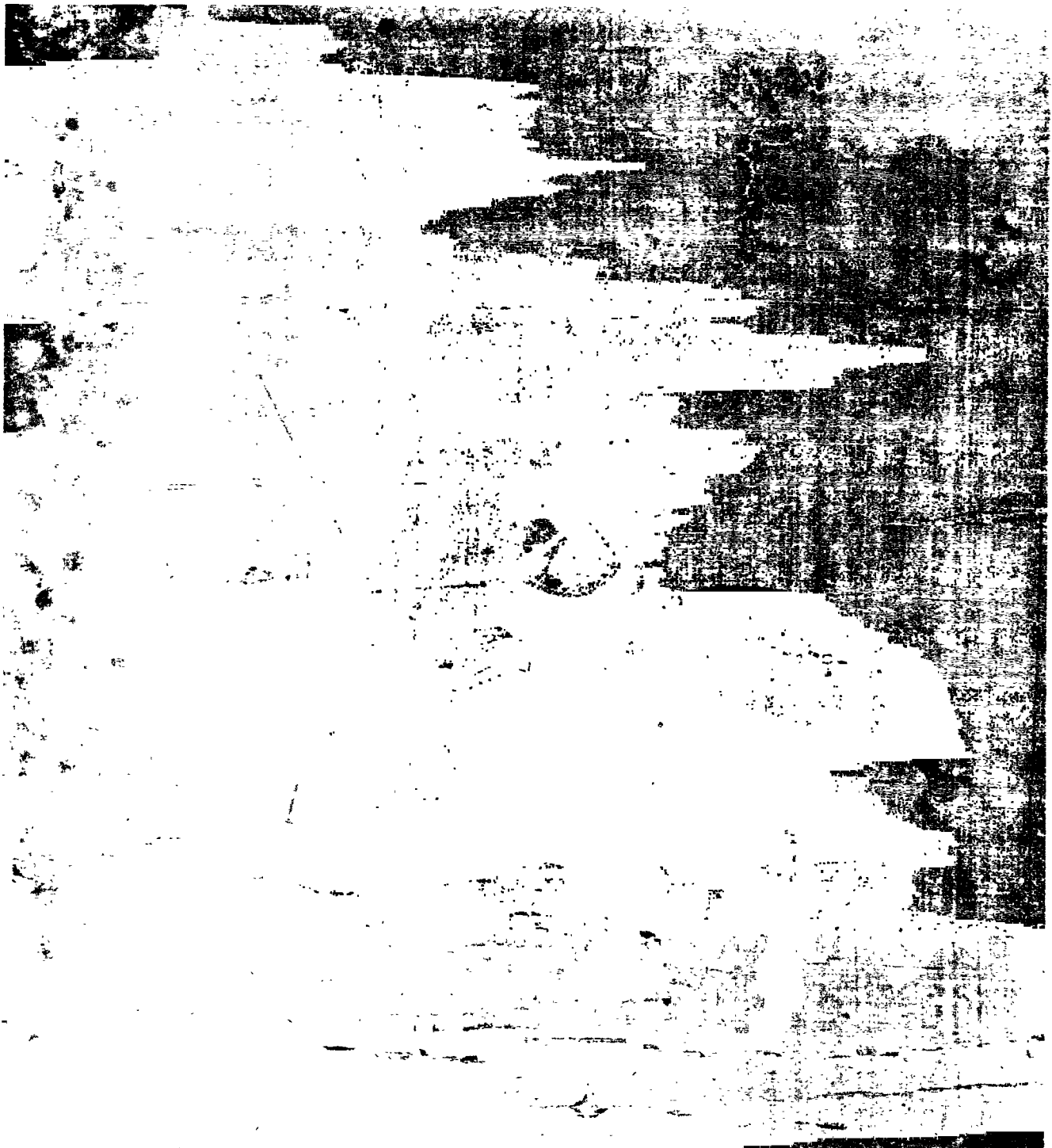
Liu Sung-nien, Mountain Landscape with Soldiers on Horseback. Palace Museum, Peiping.



Liu Sung-nien, Autumn Landscape. Boston Museum.



Li Sung, A boat on a Stormy Sea. Mr. B. Hayasaki, Tokyo.



Late Sung or Chin Painter, Princess Wenchi returning from Exile. Boston Museum.



Li Shan, Mountain and River. Freer Gallery, Washington.



Liang K'ai, Shākyamuni on His Way to the Bodhi Tree. Count Sakai. Tokyo.



Liang K'ai, Part of a Scroll representing Sixteen Lohans. Mr. F. Abe. Sumiyoshi.



Liang K'ai, Wang Hsi-chih writing on a Fan. Ex. Imperial Household Collect. Peiping.



Liang K'ai, The Sixth Ch'an Patriarch tearing up a Sūtra Scroll. Count Matsudaira. Tokyo.



Liang K'ai, The Poet Li Tai-po. Count Matsudaira. Tokyo.



Liang K'ai, A Pair of Herons alighting on Rocks. Count Daté. Tokyo.



Mus-ch'i, The White-robed Kuanyin. Daitokuji. Kyoto.



Mu-ch'i, Monkeys on a Pine-Branch. Daitokuji. Kyoto.



Mu-ch'i, A Ch'an Monk in Meditation. Baron Iwasaki. Tokyo.



Mus-ch'i, 1. Returning Boats. Count Matsudaira. 2. A Fishing Village. Mr. Nezu. Tokyo.



Mush'i, Sparrows on a Spray of Bamboo Mr. Nezu. Tokyo.



Mu-ch'i, A Bull-headed Shrike (Hahacho Bird). Count Matsudaira. Tokyo.



Ying Yü-chien, Mountain Village in Mist. Count Matsudaira. Tokyo.



Indra, Yao-chun talking to a Visitor. Marquis Kurodo. Tokyo.



P'u-kuang, Two Lohans. Baron Iwasaki. Tokyo.



Chang Fang-ju, Landscape with Herdsman. Baron Dan. Tokyo.



Ch'en Jung. Four Dragons and Gushing Water among Rocks. Boston Museum.



Ch'en Jung. Dragon appearing through Mist and Waves. Part of a Scroll. Boston Museum.



Fan An-jen, manner of, Two Carp leaping among Waves. Boston Museum.



Jih-kuan, A Branch of Vine. Tenryuji. Kyoto.



1. Tsou Fu-wei, A Branch of a Plum-tree. Freer Gallery.
2. Chao Meng-chien, Narcissus. Private Coll. China.



Wang Yen-sou, attributed to, Plum-Blossoms. Freer Gallery. Washington.



Tsou Fuzlei, A Branch of a Plum-Tree, "The Breath of Spring". Freer Gallery, Washington.



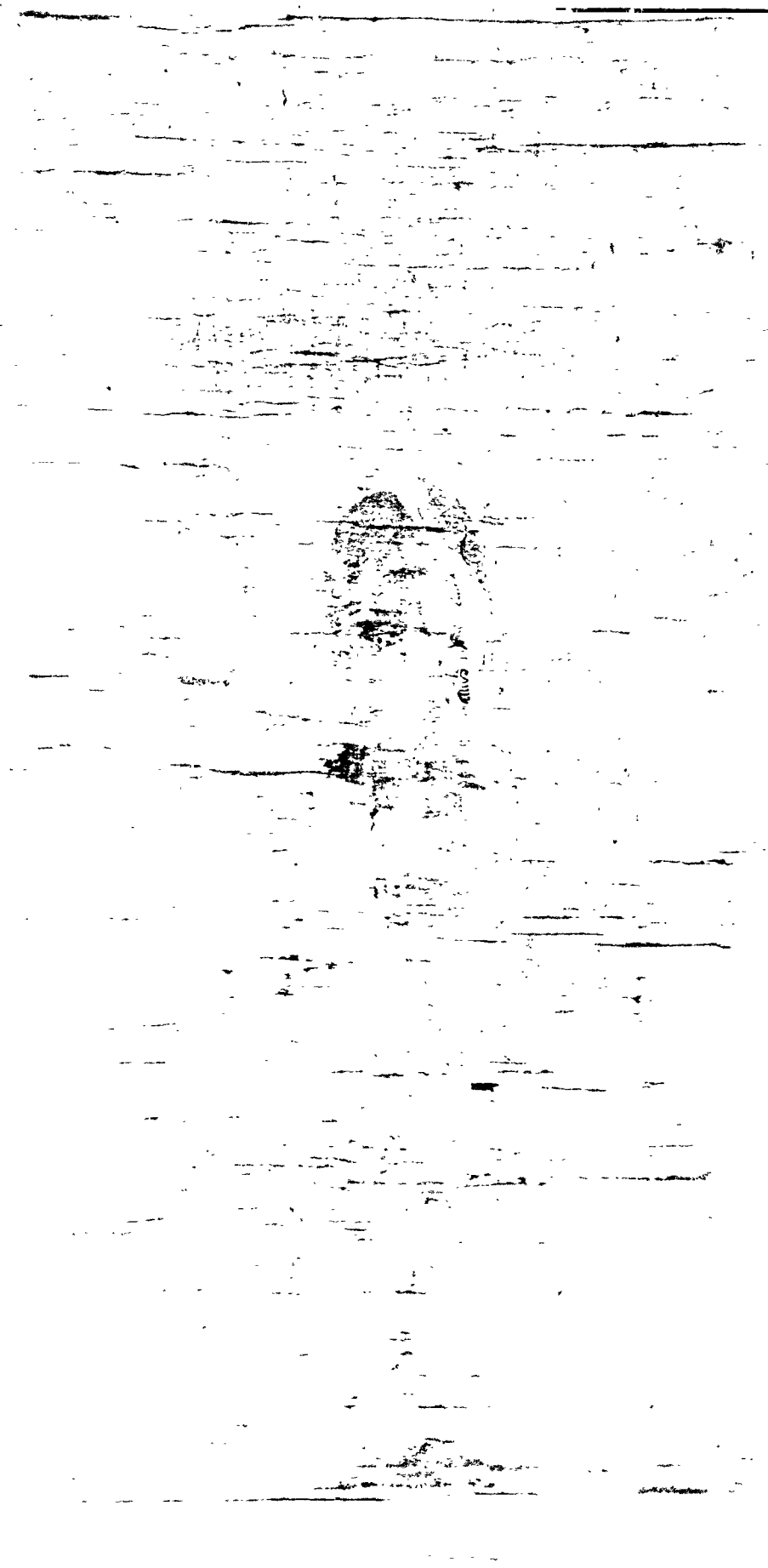
Yen Hui, attributed to, A Meditating Lohan. Mr. Murayama. Osaka.



Unknown Painter of the Chih-chêng era (1341-67). Lohan. Private Collect. Japan.



Yen Hui, attributed to, The Taoist Hsüma. Chionin. Kyoto.



Yen Hui, attributed to, A Ch'an Monk. Boston Museum.



Unknown Painter, Buddha Expounding the Law. Boston Museum.



Chao Meng-fu, Two Horses. M. A. Stoclet. Brussels.



Chao Meng-fu, attributed to, Horses Crossing a River. Freer Gallery.



Chao Meng-fu, A Goat and a Sheep. Freer Gallery.



Kuan Tao-sheng after Chao Meng-fu, The Starved Horse. Mr. G. Del Drago. New York.

時也。昔者仲卿爲高麗國之監賓館，或着是哉。用北
墨平之論此圖，着色精采，若曰：可飲燕巢，歲月非所。
政而國災莫定，則廷野焉而觀臂林泉石，脩肢勝處，立
薦衣幾十寶印，八種道士各代人，正策下帶挾紳然握
管而書，蕭然東望，星斗對峙而規角爲王，替卿而立居
士之右，高張大帽，張生而洗觀者，蒼天啓門，環筆至，以
明歸本末，國者亦如時，張蓋亮凡而觀者，禹蘇子由待
箕筮立，乃山之內，爲寶臺，立直柱，又以陳壽已生伯
時之後，故標輝脫冠，足手矯亦從伯嘗之，右就桌而觀
者是已，魯血石羅而立，漏表試書者，米元章立元章以
右觀書，伯香五分史試其石界下輪微坐，以齒齒圍圈
通求乎，此而與伯劉臣生權樓橫視席道主陳碧
處將羽扇對生，使徒者衆少游也，又有侍女二人，露英
素裳，晉朝家技也，童子叩人一異才，一雄古研一持獨
賣秋，故應於後一對，靈瑤名界果懷也，而古甚覺鼎身
白，雖無顯唐以此見醫，知以好歌重文，及諸君子之高
風，建簪雲狀平原，老華映如宋玉之辨美如菡芷，以
陳附於外段，各本字，以盛飲，蓋有噴子戲而不以兒者。

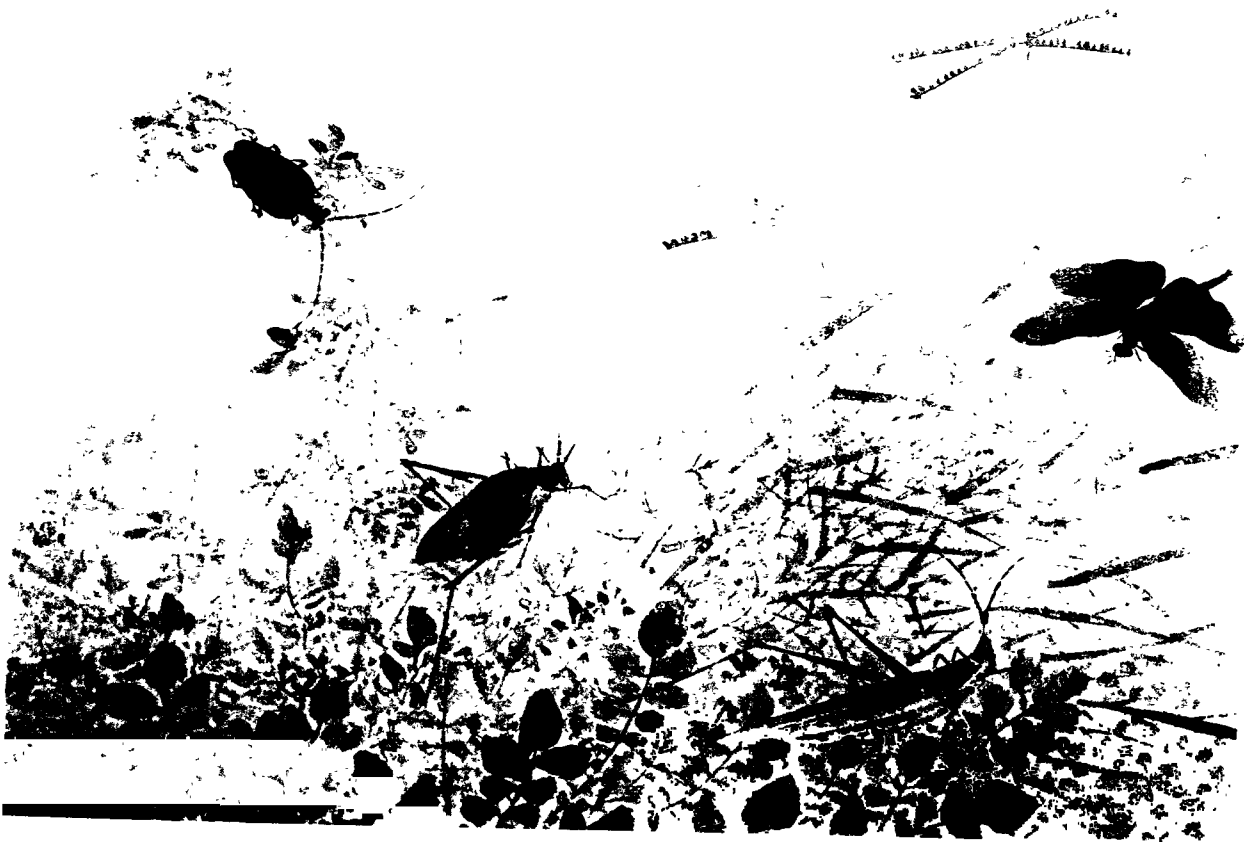
嘉慶庚戌己巳



Chao Meng-fu, "A Poetical Gathering in the Western Garden". Palace Museum. Peiping.



Ch'ien Hsuan, Insects and Lotus-leaves. Parts of a Scroll. Detroit Institute of Fine Arts.



Ch'ien Hsuan, Insects among Shrubs and Plants. Parts of a Scroll. Detroit Institute of Fine Arts.



Ch'ien Hsüan, attributed to, Emperor Ming Huang and Yang Kueifei.
National Museum. Peiping.



Wang Yüan, A Branch of Wild Camelia. Mr. K. Magoshi. Tokyo.



Kung K'ai, attributed to, A Fisherman asleep in his Boat. Freer Gallery.



Liu Kuan-tao, Landscape with three Poets. Ereer Gallery.



Jen Jen-fa, Bamboo Garden with Pavilion. Kawasaki Collect. Kobe.



Kao K'o-kung, Mountain in Rain. Palace Museum. Peiping.



Kao Jan-hui, Mountain in Snow. Konchi-in. Kyoto.



常懷杜甫詩
傳神不薄今
人愛古人大
瘳為友意如
是國出芝蘭
氣味親



Huang Kung-wang. Mountain Village. Ex. Imperial Household Collect. Peiping.



Huang Kung-wang. Mountain Village in Evening Mist. Mr. P'ang Yüan-chi. Shanghai.



Wang Mêng, High Mountains. Mr. Shao Fuzying. Peiping.



Wang Mêng, Mountain Landscape with a Hermit's Abode. Mr. Ti Pao-hsien. Peiping.

寶社山神松林隱居
 溪冲襟海而自放之
 遠望之於吟多佳
 此意接錄間與妙
 日神子居何將舍此

鐵產邑人楊維和刻

翠黛非專秋滿林虛囂豈可
 散頰襟風上寒衣樓山燕雀靜蛩
 蛩和客蛩是蛩白雲侵野屐高
 松清露盈襟綠思悠然不作人間想
 老鶴棲莎萬里心

東海鮑主倪瓚



Ni Tsan, Autumn Landscape. National Museum. Stockholm.

至正二年暮冬將游吳
松舟過甫里為玄素翁
留寓其處泊舟南渚
忽然四政月玄素翁之
季子邦陽隱跡為黃
冠師頗以詩酒自放三
月廿賦詩見贈余輒
畫此以贈云邦明見之
當共一笑也滄浪漫士
倪瓚記

流光冉冉遂驚波文物空
牙永和道崔重尋舊城
郭當時風致已無多

東坡徐寅



Ni Tsan, Mountains at the River. Ex. Imperial Household Collect. Peiping.



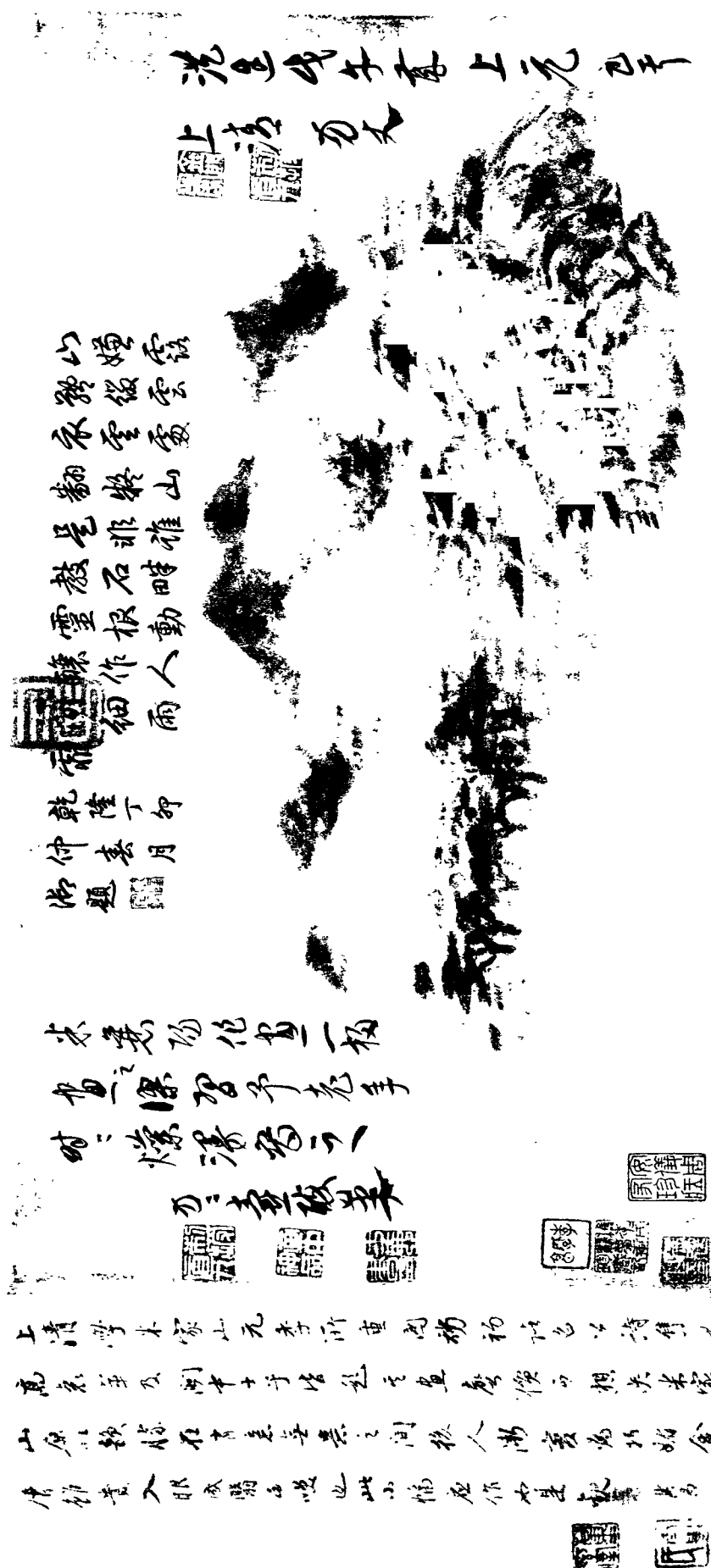
Wu Chên, Pavilions at the Mountain Stream. Mr. Ti Pao-hsien. Peiping.



Wu Chên, Five Men in a Boat. Mr. F. Abe. Sumiyoshi.



Wu Chên, Bamboo in the Wind. Boston Museum.



Fang Ts'ung-i, Landscape in Mist. Ex. Imperial Household Collect. Peiping.



Wang Mien, A Branch of a Plum-tree. Mr. Shao Fu-ying. Peiping.

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